The Report of the

Early Education and Care Advisory Committee



Submitted on December 15, 2004

Welcome from the Co-Chairs of the Advisory Committee on Early Education and Care



December 15, 2004

To the Citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

We are pleased to present this report to you from the 21 members of the Early Education and Care Advisory Committee pursuant to section 344 of the fiscal year 2005 budget. The new Board of Early Education and Care has been formed with members to be appointed by March 1, 2005 and a commissioner appointed by April 1, 2005. The new department, which begins operation July 1, 2005, will encompass a shift and streamlining of programs and services for children and families and quality enhancement for the workforce and early education and care programs.

The legislature appointed two groups to make recommendations on reorganizing the system. One was the Early Education and Care Council, comprised of the Commissioners of the Department of Education, the Office of Child Care Services, and the Department of Public Health. Their charge was to develop a plan to consolidate statelevel administration of existing early education and care services. Their recommendations are due December 15, 2004.

The second group is this committee. Our charge was to study and make recommendations on the foundational and organizational elements for a statewide, high-quality, voluntary, universally accessible preschool program, including workforce development, school readiness assessment and program evaluation. We also looked at program service delivery.

The following are the advisory committee members and the organizations they represent: Mary Ann Anthony, Massachusetts Association for the Education of Young Children; Vicki Bartolini, Massachusetts Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators; Helen Charlupski, Massachusetts Association of School Committees: Stacy Dimino, Massachusetts Association of Day Care Agencies; Rep. Brian Golden; Caroline Haines, Massachusetts Head Start Association; Sue Halloran, Massachusetts Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Network; Amy Kershaw, Strategies for Children; Rep. Stephen LeDuc; Sen. David Magnani; Kathleen McDermott, family child care systems; Sen. Thomas McGee; Sen. Joan Menard; Anne Nunes, Massachusetts Independent Child Care

Organization; Stephen Perla, non-public schools; Ada Rosmarin, Massachusetts Association of Community Partnerships for Children, Rep. Marie St. Fleur; Sen. Bruce Tarr; and Rep. Alice Wolf. To assist the committee Christine Johnson-Staub and Joni Block served as consultants. We thank members and consultants for their dedication to this work.

In October the advisory committee held four public hearings throughout the state in Salem, Clinton, Pittsfield, and Fall River to seek input relative to our charge. Subcommittees reviewed testimony, solicited additional information and made recommendations to the full advisory committee. A public hearing was held in Boston in December to solicit input on the proposals. The committee then reviewed each recommendation for inclusion in this report. While not all members agree with each recommendation put forth, there was strong support for this report as a document of our work and recommendations. We suggest it can be used as a basis for continuing the dialogue.

This is an exciting time for young children and their families. We want to do what is best for them so children are ready to learn when they enter kindergarten. They will receive due attention as the Commonwealth proceeds toward the goal of universal access to voluntary, high-quality preschool education for all 3 to 5 year olds. We have taken another important step. There will be many more steps to take. We look forward to your continued interest, comments and support.

Very truly yours,

Sen. Robert A. Antonioni State Senator Worcester and Middlesex District Rep. Patricia A. Haddad State Representative 5th Bristol District

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I. Members of the Early Education and Care Advisory Committee

Co-Chairs

Senator Robert Antonioni Representative Patricia Haddad

Members

Mary Ann Anthony, Massachusetts Association for the Education of Young Children Vicki Bartolini, Massachusetts Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators Helen Charlupski, Massachusetts Association of School Committees Stacey Dimino, Massachusetts Association of Day Care Agencies

Representative Brian Golden

Caroline Haines, Massachusetts Head Start Association

Sue Halloran, Massachusetts Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Network

Amy Kershaw, Strategies for Children

Representative Stephen LeDuc

Senator David Magnani

Kathleen McDermott, Representing Family Child Care Systems

Senator Thomas McGee

Senator Joan Menard

Anne Nunes, Massachusetts Independent Child Care Organization

Stephen Perla, Representing Non-Public Schools

Ada Rosmarin, Massachusetts Association of Community Partnerships for Children

Representative Marie St. Fleur

Senator Bruce Tarr Representative Alice Wolf

Subcommittee Co-Chairs

Workforce Development: Anne O'Driscoll, Office of Former Speaker Thomas A. Finneran

Mary Ann Anthony

School Readiness Assessment: Maureen Ferris, Massachusetts Legislative Children's Caucus

Amy Kershaw

Program Quality: Senator David Magnani

Caroline Haines

Linda Martin, Office of Senator David Magnani

Program Service Delivery: Sylvia Smith, Office of Senator Robert Antonioni

Stephen Perla

Consultants

Joni Block and Christine Johnson-Staub

II. Executive Summary

In the summer of 2004, the Massachusetts General Court enacted and the Governor signed legislation that created a new Department of Early Education and Care. This new agency will be responsible for the administration of all public and private early education and care programs and services in Massachusetts.



The legislation also created an Early Education and Care Advisory Committee to study and make recommendations to the General Court on the foundational and organizational elements needed to support universal access to voluntary, high-quality preschool within the early education and care system. The Advisory Committee, co-chaired by Senator Robert Antonioni and Representative Patricia Haddad, was comprised of individuals appointed to represent legislative roles, early education and care organizations, and others with expertise and demonstrated interest in early education and care services and a commitment to maximizing family choice by preserving a mixed system of high-quality public and private programs.

This report contains recommendations of the Advisory Committee as they pertain to four key areas of study:

- Workforce Development
- School Readiness Assessment
- Program Quality
- Program Service Delivery

The recommendations are built upon strengths of existing structures and are an attempt to construct appropriate systems that promote collaboration among state agencies, programs, and individuals while supporting high-quality early education and care services for all of our Commonwealth's children.

To address the key issues outlined in the legislation in a comprehensive manner, the co-chairs of the Early Education and Care Advisory Committee implemented several strategies for collecting public input and developing recommendations. Regional public hearings were held. Subcommittees were formed to address the four key areas mentioned above. Subcommittee recommendations were presented to the Advisory Committee and the public for comment. The final recommendations in this report are built upon what has been an intense and constructive public dialogue about serving the best interests of children

In making its recommendations, the Early Education and Care Advisory Committee worked to achieve consensus when possible. There are viable options for consideration and achievable goals in each area—workforce development, school readiness assessment, program quality, and program service delivery. In many cases, work has already begun. There are still areas in need of further study and discussion. The actions taken by the Advisory Committee should serve as one further step along the path to success for all children in the Commonwealth.

III. Introduction



"The central challenge is closing the gap between what we know and what we do to provide appropriate early education and care for young children."

Remarks by Dr. Jack Shonkoff to the Early Education and Care Advisory Committee November 15, 2004.

The early education and care field in Massachusetts is rich in expertise and innovative in regards to program development. The Commonwealth has a history of making strong and beneficial commitments to children. We have some of the highest licensing standards for early education and care programs and the most with national accreditation of any state. We have quality inclusive preschool programs in a variety of settings. The Board of Education already approved Early Childhood Program Standards and Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences. The Legislature and the Governor have supported the creation of a new Department of Early Education and Care and made a commitment of universal access to high-quality preschool. Work is underway to design and implement these policy directives over a period of time. It will be a positive challenge to build upon what already has been accomplished in Massachusetts and to continue to move the Commonwealth forward in providing quality early education and care.

This report compiles and analyzes information gathered through an examination of current regional, state, and national publications, discussions with early education and care personnel from other states, oral and written testimony from interested parties and concerned citizens from across the Commonwealth, and deliberations of subcommittees. The purpose of the report is to provide recommendations, supportive documentation, and a summary of findings of the Advisory Committee to the General Court and the Council on Early Education and Care¹.

Currently, three major state agencies provide the vast majority of services and support for early education and care in our state: The Massachusetts Department of Education, the Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services, and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. There are also a number of collaborating agencies and organizations which impact early education and care such as the Board of Higher Education, institutions of higher education, community organizations and programs, and other interested persons.

¹ The Council on Early Education and Care consists of the Commissioners of the Department of Education, the Department of Public Health and the Office of Child Care Services.

The members of the Advisory Committee studied each of these agencies, their programs and their services as part of the deliberations of this report.

IV. Purpose and Membership of Advisory Committee

In the summer of 2004, the Massachusetts General Court enacted and the Governor signed legislation that created a new Department of Early Education and Care.

Chapter 205 of the Acts of 2004 states:

The General Laws are hereby amended by inserting after chapter 15C, the following new chapter: -

Chapter 15D – Department of Early Education and Care

Section 1. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the commonwealth to assure every child a fair and full opportunity to reach his full potential by providing and encouraging services which maximize a child's capacity and opportunity to learn, which strengthen family life, and which support families in their essential function of nurture for a child's physical, social, educational, moral, and spiritual development.

Section 2. There shall be a department of early education and care, in this chapter called the department, which shall serve as the lead agency for the administration of all public and private early education and care programs and services. The department shall be the state agency responsible for compliance with early education and care services under the Personal responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (Pub. L. 104-193), or any successor federal statute. The department shall be the state education agency for the purposes of early education and care under federal law. The department shall seek, apply for and encourage the use of any federal funds for early education and care services, and shall facilitate the coordination of federal, state, and local policies concerning early education and care. The department shall be under the supervision and control of a board of early education and care.

The legislative language continues with the establishment of a Board of Early Education and Care to oversee and a position of Commissioner to run the new agency.

Additionally, an Advisory Committee was formed to study the development of the department. The following are excerpts from the legislation:

Chapter 149 of the Acts of 2004 states:

There shall be an advisory committee on early education and care for the purpose of undertaking a study of those foundational and organizational elements that will allow the state to build a first-rate early education and care system that provides every 3 to 5 year old pre-school child access to a high-quality education and care program which meets professionally accepted standards, including, but not limited to, the early childhood program standards and guidelines for preschool learning experiences established by the board of education, is delivered by a well-trained early educator in a variety of public and private settings under the provisions of chapter 15D, and is in conjunction with special education services offered by the department of education and early intervention services offered by the department of public health, if applicable.

An Advisory Committee, co-chaired by Senator Robert Antonioni and Representative Patricia Haddad, was formed to study foundational issues related to the new Department of Early Education and Care and to the creation of a high-quality preschool program and to report to the General Court and the Council on Early Education and Care by December 15, 2004. Four subcommittees were identified:

- 1. Workforce Development
- 2. School Readiness Assessment System
- 3. Program Quality
- 4. Program Service Delivery

Members of the Advisory Committee each participated in a subcommittee. For members of each subcommittee, please refer to Appendix A (a memo issued to the subcommittee at the beginning of their deliberations).

V. Methodology

Evaluating current early education and care policy and making comprehensive recommendations related to creating the new Department of Early Education and Care is an enormous and complex task. To address the key issues outlined in the legislation – workforce, school readiness assessment, program quality, and service delivery –as completely as possible, the co-chairs of the Early Education and Care Advisory Committee implemented several strategies for collecting public input and developing recommendations:

- 1) The Advisory Committee held public hearings in five regions of the state: Central (Clinton); North Shore (Salem); Southeastern (Fall River); Western (Pittsfield); and metropolitan Boston (State House).
- 2) The Advisory Committee Co-Chairs created and appointed committee members to four subcommittees, representing the four key areas of recommendations:
 - a. Workforce Development, co-chaired by Anne O'Driscoll of former Speaker Finneran's office and Mary Ann Anthony of the Massachusetts Association for the Education of Young Children (MassAEYC)

- b. School Readiness Assessment, co-chaired by Maureen Ferris of the Massachusetts Legislative Children's Caucus and Amy Kershaw of Strategies for Children
- c. Program Quality, co-chaired by Senator David Magnani, Linda Martin from Senator's Magnani's office, and Caroline Haines representing Massachusetts Head Start Association
- d. Program Service Delivery, co-chaired by Sylvia Smith of Senator Robert Antonioni's office and Stephen Perla, representing non-public schools
- 3) Subcommittees met several times beginning October 27 and ending November 22, 2004, to:
 - a. Review existing research and information related to their specific topics;
 - b. Receive additional information from invited experts in the field; and
 - c. Discuss their assigned areas of policy and develop draft recommendations.
- 4) The Advisory Committee received the recommendations from the subcommittees at a meeting on November 30, 2004.
- 5) Subcommittee recommendations were posted on the General Court's website for public viewing and comment, with responses being accepted before or at a public hearing on December 9, 2004.
- 6) The Advisory Committee also met to hear presentations and/or receive testimony from Dr. Jack Shonkoff, Dean of The Heller School of Brandeis University, Commissioner David Driscoll from the Department of Education, and Joanne McMahan, Acting Commissioner of Office of Child Care Services. Commissioner Christine Ferguson from the Department of Public Health provided testimony at the December 9, 2004 public hearing.
- 7) The Early Education and Care Advisory Committee met for its final time on Monday, December 13, 2004 to consider public comment and finalize Committee recommendations to be included this report.

VI. Review of Existing Related Reports and Documents

Recognizing that much work has already been done to address some of the issues confronting the field of early education and care, the legislature included a provision in the fiscal year 2005 state budget recommending that the Early Education and Care Advisory Committee review and incorporate the findings of two previously existing reports on early education and care:

- School Readiness in Massachusetts: A Report of the Governor's Commission on School Readiness (November 15, 2001); and
- The Report of the Massachusetts Early Education and Care Council (March 2004)

The following is a summary of recommendations from these documents related to each subject area considered by the Advisory Committee.

Workforce Development

School Readiness in Massachusetts: A Report of the Governor's Commission on School Readiness

"To ensure that programs have sufficient numbers of personnel who are knowledgeable about child development and who can relate positively to young children and their families, we recommend that the Governor direct the relevant agencies to:

- Implement any additional reimbursement rate increases for early education and care providers, including providers of early intervention services, so they are linked to quality improvements, such as staff salary and benefits, staff training, education, and recognized program assessments such as the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS), National Association for the Education of young Children (NAEYC) accreditation, or other appropriate assessments.
- Integrate and coordinate all state and federal training and professional development resources through a collaborative group (or consortium) with designated representation from state and community agencies, higher education, providers, and parents...
- Require state-funded colleges and universities to implement "articulation agreements," i.e. standard agreements for the acceptance of credits earned elsewhere, that make it easier for providers of school readiness services to complete degree requirements.
- Implement a state loan forgiveness program for college graduates who enter and work in the field of early childhood services. The program should encourage retention by further reducing loans based on the number of years graduates work with children and families.
- Build linkages to the training programs and funding within the state and local workforce development systems (DLWD, DET, and Career Centers).
- Explore and implement strategies for making access to health care coverage opportunities available to eligible providers and employees of center-based and family child care services
- Establish a vehicle for public recognition of outstanding early childhood personnel"

The Report also included Concepts and Guiding Principles:

<u>Concept:</u> Massachusetts ensures the recruitment, development and retention of a strong workforce serving young children

Guiding Principles:

 Massachusetts will continue to provide a high-quality, stable, professional workforce for young children and their families and view this workforce,

- in partnership with parents, as fundamental to the healthy emotional, social, and cognitive development of its young children, including young children with disabilities.
- The workforce reflects the rich ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity of Massachusetts' families, supports greater male involvement in the field of early education and care, and ensures that this diversity is reflected in all roles and at all levels within the workforce.
- Programs have sufficient numbers of personnel who are well trained, well compensated (including benefits); have the personal qualities necessary to relate positively to young children, and who find their jobs fulfilling and enjoyable.
- In-home and relative caregivers are included in all existing outreach and training efforts.
- Workers are prepared to meet the needs of all children, including children with special needs.

Report of the Massachusetts Early Education and Care Council

"Ensure the creation of a workforce system to support the education, training, and compensation of teachers. Recommendations are:

- Develop core competencies that are integrated into coordinated professional credentialing and training processes for early education and care staff (public school and child care center-based staff).
- Establish opportunities for advancement along a career ladder
- Work with the Board of Higher Education to implement the newly established Early Childhood Transfer Compact between two and four year public higher education institutions
- Ensure that any increased in the standard state rates for services are used to improve compensation across early education and care settings, including family child care."

School Readiness Assessment

School Readiness in Massachusetts: A Report of the Governor's Commission on School Readiness

- Definition of "school readiness": "The abilities and capacities of young children as follows:
 - o The ability to communicate wants, needs, thoughts, and feelings;
 - o Physical well-being, including children being physically healthy, safe, well-rested and well-nourished, and appropriate motor development;
 - o Emotional well-being as well as an enthusiasm and a curiosity for learning;

- Social knowledge and competence including the skills needed to maintain positive relationships with adults and other children and the skills needed to get along in a group setting;
- o Appropriate knowledge and cognitive skills for schools."
- "Build upon and expand the existing efforts of public schools to be ready for children by developing and implementing a clear, measurable welcome and orientation plan, assisting children and families in transitions, and having methods for interacting effectively with parents and providers." (State agency distributes best practices; welcome and orientation plans specifically address transition from early intervention to the public schools; each school designates person as key contact for parents and providers.)
- Preventative screening process for children ages birth to five.

Report of the Massachusetts Early Education and Care Council, March 2004

"mechanisms to extend student identifiers for children in early education and care programs be explored."

Program Quality

School Readiness in Massachusetts: A Report of the Governor's Commission on School Readiness

One of the recommendations made by the Commission was to:

Maximize effective and efficient service delivery by removing barriers, making transitions between services "seamless" for children and their families, eliminating duplication of services, and addressing gaps in services...

A goal under that recommendation with five objectives is as follows:

"Goal: Measure Massachusetts' progress towards school readiness on an on-going basis by:

- Developing baseline information and ways to measure success against established indicators consistent with the Commission's definition of school readiness including program performance standards and outcome measurements;
- Coordinating data and technology systems and standardizing data collection across agencies including building on existing efforts;
- Involving parents in the evaluation and design of services and measuring parent satisfaction to further enhance service delivery;
- Monitoring and reporting on statewide school readiness indicators across agencies;
- Evaluating integration and coordination activities on an on-going basis and instituting change, where needed, for continuous improvement."

The Report also included Concepts and Guiding Principles:

<u>Concept:</u> Quality indicators, consistent performance measures, and evaluation support and promote school readiness.

Guiding Principles:

- Research-based goals with outcome measurements and indicators will be developed for the Commission's definition of school readiness that respect the range and diversity of child development
- State agencies (or a state coordinating body), with public input, will develop, distribute, and revise performance measures based on a common understanding of school readiness in order to gauge progress toward the Commission's vision of school readiness
- Agencies will incorporate uniform measures of quality for similar services
- Uniform quality standards are based on the Commission's definition of school readiness for programs and services for children birth to five years
- Quality and parent satisfaction are key indicators of the success of family support services

Report of the Massachusetts Early Education and Care Council, March 2004

Adopt uniform program standards and guidelines

- A single set of "Commonwealth" standards and guidelines for early education and care programs for three and four year olds, based on the recently issued and well-received DOE standards and guidelines for preschool learning experiences, be adopted by OCCS and DOE and promulgated in regulation as necessary. Work on these Commonwealth standards and guidelines will be coordinated with the efforts of the Massachusetts School Readiness Project, which is developing performance outcomes to measure school readiness indicators.
- DOE and OCCS work with Head Start and ACF staff to review how such a set of Commonwealth standards, which incorporate Head Start Performance Standards, can be used best by Massachusetts Head Start programs.
- DOE, OCCS, DPH, Early Head Start, and ACF work together to develop uniform Commonwealth standards for programs for infants and toddlers and for family child care programs.

Streamline the self-evaluation process for early education and care programs, based on the Commonwealth standards.

- ECERS (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale)
- FDCERS (Family Day Care Environment Rating Scale)
- ITERS (Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale)
- SACERS (School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale)
- NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children Accreditation Program)
- DOE Early Childhood Program Standards

- DOE and OCCS develop a Massachusetts evaluation system to measure program quality throughout the variety of programs for three and four year olds in the Commonwealth receiving state funding
- The self-evaluation system be based upon the Commonwealth standards and incorporate the best processes contained in the current self-evaluation instruments and systems, such as self-study, documentation, and onsite visits
- The agencies work with regional ACF staff to determine if Massachusetts Head Start programs can meet the federal annual program self-assessment requirement through completion of the single Massachusetts program evaluation system
- A coordinated self-evaluation system for programs serving children ages birth to three be developed through the Council, including the Early Intervention program

Coordinate state programs and licensure/certification monitoring activities across the agencies.

- DOE, OCCS and DPH establish a joint program monitoring plan, coordinated instruments and protocol, and schedules to reduce duplication of effort at the state and local level. Implementation of the components of the joint plan should draw upon the skill set of each agency's staff
- Information gathered by an agency during a monitoring visit be shared, as appropriate, with the other agencies involved with the program.

Another overarching goal of the Council was to:

"Establish the appropriate balance between funding for direct service, quality enhancement, and administration..."

Program Service Delivery

School Readiness in Massachusetts: A Report of the Governor's Commission on School Readiness, November 15, 2001

- "Develop a single comprehensive statewide communication strategy to ensure the dissemination of relevant, current, and useful information about school readiness and available children's services. This communication strategy should be culturally and linguistically appropriate, use multiple media, and reach parents and caregivers in both formal and informal care settings." (Include printed materials on development, information on literacy, an 800 number for information, single online access to current information.)
- "Establish multiple points of entry for families into a common resource for information, services and eligibility." (coordinate services on community level, including co-location; common application form; coordinating assessment across programs; coordinating communication of information about programs; coordinating eligibility requirements.)

- Coordinate and streamline services to maximize federal funding and efficiency.
- Use a pilot grant program to spark innovation in serving targeted populations (e.g. ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse)

Report of the Massachusetts Early Education and Care Council, March 2004

- "A portion of existing grant funding build upon the role of local CPC councils in conducting local needs assessments and outreach to parents/families and the broader community, determining family service needs throughout the community, providing onsite technical assistance and professional development, and providing other related services."
- "OCCS and DOE subsidies for direct services for three and four-year old children and their families be managed through a state administered system, led by OCCS with funding following eligible children."
- "existing funding build upon the role of the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies and other entities to implement early education and care services."
- "CPC councils, EI programs, and CCR&R agencies work together to deliver coordinated training throughout Commonwealth."
- "DOE, OCCS, and DOH establish a joint program monitoring plan, coordinated instruments and protocol, and schedules to reduce duplication of effort at the state and local level. Implementation of the components of the joint plan should draw upon the skill set of each agency's staff."
- "the agencies develop options and cost projections for establishing standard state rates at an appropriate percentage of private market rates."
- "the agencies work toward a goal of phasing in a uniform financial eligibility criteria for child care subsidies."
- "the agencies develop a joint definition of children at-risk for eligibility purposes."
- "Establish a Commonwealth policy regarding family involvement that describes meaningful roles and participation of parents in early education and care programs.... As a resource, the DOE's Parent, Family, and Community Involvement Guide..."
- "Develop a guidebook and expand training opportunities for parents on how they can nurture their children's development and education."

- "the eCCIMS data system be piloted jointly by OCCS and DOE in late Spring 2004 and phased in during FY05 and FY06."
- "Seek legislative language that will allow the DOE and OCCS to share data regarding the parents and children who receive services provided under programs funded by the Commonwealth for reporting, program implementation and evaluation, and policy development purposes."

VII. Recommendations of the EEC Advisory Committee

It is noted in brackets when subcommittee recommendations were modified by the full Advisory Committee.

A. Workforce Development

I. Professional Development System

Recommendation WF1

Develop a comprehensive professional development system that supports the early education and care field (birth through school-age). The system's elements should provide the existing workforce (teachers, paraprofessionals, administrators, directors, supervisors, and others who work directly with teaching staff) opportunities to transition to higher standards, should improve retention rates, and should attract new recruits to the field of early education and care. At a minimum, the system should reflect leading industry approaches to the following elements:

- Core competencies
- Collaboration in and with higher education
- Credit for prior learning
- Compensation/recruitment/retention
- Access to professional development opportunities
- Professional development registry
- Career ladder

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation WF2

Identify system-wide core competencies—the knowledge and skills needed to provide quality education and care to children (birth through school-age)—that reflect current research and best practices and can be aligned with national, industry and higher-education standards.

Recommendation WF3

Facilitate collaboration between higher education institutions and the early education and care workforce to determine professional development needs, to assess institutional capacity to meet needs, to overcome existing barriers in the higher education system and to assist in the development of a professional development registry (see Recommendation WF7 below). Study further the feasibility of designing and enhancing programs such as The Massachusetts Apprenticeship Program, Advancing the Field, and Building Careers.

Recommendation WF4

Develop a statewide system for granting credit for prior learning and experience that is built upon the core competencies and allows students to translate their knowledge and skills into college-level coursework.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation WF5

Design a plan for increased and equitable compensation that reflects uniform higher professional standards, as well as improves recruitment and retention. (Consider new and existing resources such as scholarships, grants, tuition remission, loans and loan forgiveness programs which include service commitment components, and examine models such as the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) program, the WAGE\$ program, and other unique incentive programs).

Recommendation WF6

Facilitate access to higher education and on-going professional development opportunities for all sectors of the diverse early education and care workforce. In particular, accommodate for:

- the limited financial resources of the workforce;
- the need for career counseling;
- the need for general academic and literacy support;
- the linguistic diversity of the workforce;
- the unique needs of adult learners and non-traditional students; and
- scheduling and location difficulties.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation WF7

Design a registry (database) that (1) documents the professional development (degrees awarded, courses taken, etc.) of the workforce and allows for accurate and timely assessment of the professional development needs of the workforce and (2) allows easy access to information on state-approved early education and care trainers and training programs.

Recommendation WF8

Establish a comprehensive career ladder or lattice that allows for multiple points of entry, opportunities to move within the field and across settings, programs, and age groups (birth through school-age). The career ladder must include compensation guidelines linked to attainment of position.

[Modified by full Committee]

II. Licensing/Credentials/Certification

Recommendation WF9

Study further what license/credentials/certification will be required of teachers in early education and care programs incorporating the existing DOE *Early Childhood Program Standards and Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences*, research on child development, and allowing for a representative sample of the workforce and the field at large. The study should include how to integrate the existing DOE PreK-2 teacher licensure into a unified certification system, studying the existing workforce and developing contingencies for "grandfathering" in of the existing workforce with a goal toward preparing an equally qualified workforce for all sectors of a mixed system of delivery.

[Modified by full Committee]

[Recommendation WF10 was deleted by full Committee, and a new WF10 was created based on a recommendation moved from the Program Quality section]

Recommendation WF10

Enhance licensing standards for family child care providers that include increased hours of training in specific areas, linkage to college degrees, and increase in compensation commensurate with development.

[Created and consensus of full Committee]

B. School Readiness Assessment

I. Principles of a School Readiness Assessment System

Recommendation SRA1

The School Readiness Assessment System shall:

- be among the primary functions of the Department of Early Education and Care, and shall be a freestanding, high level, and visible function within the agency
- work toward accountability and quality improvement over time
- include multiple components that are coordinated, but meet different needs, including a program assessment piece consistent with the recommendations of the Program Quality subcommittee
- be designed to benefit children
- consider progress in all developmental domains
- apply to entire Early Education and Care system (all ages and settings)
- include resources for training and technical assistance
- be aligned with state-established learning standards, curriculum guidelines, and developmental benchmarks
- use tools for assessment and screening that are reliable, valid, and culturally and linguistically appropriate

Recommendation SRA2

Acceptable purposes of a School Readiness Assessment System include:

- instructional (adjustments to curriculum to meet learning guidelines)
- communication with parents and kindergarten programs
- identify children who need additional services
- evaluate how program is meeting goals (Accountability)

II. Child Assessment

Recommendation SRA3

Principles of an Effective Child Assessment System include:

- drawing information from multiple sources
- conducting assessment in the child's natural setting, based on observation by teachers or others familiar with the child
- conducting assessment by highly trained assessors, very familiar with the instrument(s) used
- using a limited variety of tools, which collect consistent information and are approved by the Department of Early Education and Care
- utilizing assessment tools which also reflect a child's approach to learning, and which incorporate social and emotional indicators.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SRA4

While it will take a great amount of resources, ideally all programs working with preschool-age children would ultimately do child assessment, and programs would be supported in that effort with the necessary workforce development and other resources.

Recommendation SRA5

Teachers can best assess children in their natural setting, which in the case of an early education and care program is the child's classroom or family child care home.

Recommendation SRA6

The state shall use purchasing power with identified vendors of assessment systems to maximize resources and ensure alignment with learning guidelines.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SRA7

The Department of Early Education and Care shall provide start-up and ongoing materials, training, and technical assistance, and assume the costs of these requirements; the Department's budget shall provide for a well-resourced school-readiness assessment system.

Recommendation SRA8

The results of child assessments shall not be used for "high stakes" decisions regarding individual children or programs.

Recommendation SRA9

Because a child's age is an important variable in considering school-readiness, the Board of Education shall standardize kindergarten entry-age cut off date across the Commonwealth to age five by September 1, with a phase in plan for those districts not currently using that date.

[Modified by full Committee]

III. Child Screening

Recommendation SRA10/11

The Board and Department shall develop and implement a system of **developmental** screening which shall take place at entry to preschool programs (consistent with Head Start requirements to screen within 45 calendar days of entry) and regularly thereafter. The Board shall review and approve several developmental screening tools that are widely accepted and research-based for use within programs and ensure that these tools address all developmental domains - cognitive, social/emotional, linguistic, and physical. Although there can be several tools, they shall capture roughly the same information. The Board and Department shall provide technical assistance to support communities trying to develop a single screening tool.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SRA12

In implementing the screening, early education and care programs are encouraged to collaborate with their Local Educational Agency, local early education and care councils, and other community-based programs to create a community-wide screening process.

[Modified by full Committee]

IV. <u>Transition of Children Between Infant and Toddler Programs, Preschool,</u> and Kindergarten

Recommendation SRA13

Guiding Principles for Transitions

- foster relationships as resources
- promote continuity (e.g.: align curriculum, standards, guidelines and assessments)
- focus on family strengths and support and interactions with schools
- tailor practice to individual needs
- form collaborative relationships across programs

[Recommendation SRA14 combined with SRA17]

Recommendation SRA15

The Board and Department shall develop a parent consent form for assessment information, which will be used at the time of enrollment in an early education and care program. The form will give permission for early education and care programs to share information with the child's new school at time of kindergarten entry. While parents will still retain control over whether assessment information gets shared it should be built into the process. If a parent consents to having the information shared, it will be automatically forwarded by the early education and care program. The last progress report of the year – before a child enters kindergarten -- will include a reminder of the consent and will be a time for a transition plan to be jointly developed by the parent and the provider.

Recommendation SRA16

Early education and care programs shall include transitions as part of their curriculum for children.

Recommendation SRA17 (with SRA 14 included)

The Board and Department of Early Education and Care and the Board and Department of Education shall jointly develop a policy plan on successful transitions to kindergarten from home or early education and care programs. The plan shall include any policy or regulatory changes necessary to ensure smooth transitions. Transitions must involve families, and be based on a strength-based model where folders are not simply transferred from one teacher to another. The policy plan will be based on best practices and research on early education and care assessment and successful transitions and shall:

• take advantage of key opportunities throughout the year prior to kindergarten entry to integrate transitions into kindergarten

- include adequate exposure for children and families to the kindergarten environment before entry and involve of families early and regularly in transition planning
- require every preschool program and every school (public or private) to ensure smooth transitions to kindergarten
- involve local early education and care councils in developing a transition plan for all children in a community
- be based on the recognition that transitions are sensitive times for parents and children
- include actual verbal contact between the early education and care program and kindergarten teacher whenever possible
- ensure parental consent.

[Modified by full Committee]

V. <u>Implementation</u>

Recommendation SRA18

In the development of the workforce development system, the Board and Department shall recognize and incorporate the need for early educators to be well-trained and comfortable with any school readiness assessment system. Course work, professional development trainings, core competencies and potentially minimum teacher qualifications and certification should all incorporate the need for familiarity with early education and care observation and assessment.

Recommendation SRA19

As the Department of Early Education and Care is created, the Board shall ensure that the principles and recommendations outlined above are incorporated into the licensing, regulations, and operating policies of the Department to guide its work.

Recommendation SRA20

The Board of Early Education and Care shall build on and consider the work and findings of the School Readiness Indicator Project (SRIP) working subcommittee on early childhood assessments, and the recommendations of this subcommittee shall be submitted to the SRIP working subcommittee on early childhood assessments to inform its work.

Recommendation SRA21

The timeline for implementing these School Readiness Assessment Recommendations shall follow the following recommended order, and shall be completed no later than calendar year 2008:

- 1. development of approved developmental benchmarks, learning standards and curriculum guidelines for all age groups, beginning with ages three and four
- 2. look at what programs are currently using, and if appropriate use and build on findings of School Readiness Indicator Project
- 3. evaluation and piloting of assessment tools
- 4. selection of assessment tools

- 5. customization of tools (working with vendors where appropriate)
- 6. initial and ongoing training of workforce
- 7. pilot tools in different demographic populations
- 8. full roll-out of tools first to programs serving three and four-year-olds, then to all age groups
- 9. initial and ongoing evaluation of School Readiness Assessment System [Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SRA22

The implementation of this Committee's recommendations regarding a system of child screening shall take place simultaneously to the implementation timeline outlined in Recommendation SRA21, and should take place in the following order:

- 1. identifying acceptable screening tools
- 2. training workforce and programs on screening tools
- 3. changing regulations to include regular screening, and screening at entry to programs
- 4. establish and approved referral process for children who have needs identified through screening
- 5. implement new screening requirements at re-licensing visit for individual programs

VI. Areas for further study

Recommendation SRA23

The Department of Early Education and Care and its Board shall study and make recommendations related to the type and use of aggregated data collected through individual child assessments and child screenings. These recommendations should include direction as to the type of data that can or shall be aggregated, whether it can or shall be aggregated at the program, community, or statewide level, and with whom that data should be shared.

[Modified by full Committee]

C. Program Quality

I. Development of Standards and Use of a Tool that Evaluates Quality

Recommendation PQ1

Develop a single document that will have consistent goals, philosophy, and guiding principles for all programs (infant/toddler, preschool {center based and public school}, family child care, and school-age child care) with separate sections for standards related to each specific program. Existing documents, such as the Head Start Standards and the Massachusetts Early Childhood Standards will be incorporated into the instrument to ensure that all current best practices and regulations are being incorporated.

Recommendation PQ2

Identify an assessment instrument(s) that is acceptable to ensure program quality and that meets the standards. No program will be required to complete more than one assessment instrument.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation PQ3

Utilize existing instruments currently being used (NAEYC Accreditation, ECERS, National Association of Family Child Care) until new instrument(s) are identified and agreed upon.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation PQ4

Support the ongoing development of standards for family child care programs being planned for by the Office of Child Care Services, the Department of Education, and experts in the field.

Recommendation PQ5

Develop standards for infant/toddler and school-age programs.

Recommendation PQ6

The Department will provide licensing and technical assistance. [Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation PQ7

All programs will meet minimum licensing requirements to operate. [Created by full Committee; Original PQ7 moved to Workforce section]

Recommendation PQ8

Implement a plan that promotes quality based on high standards. The plan should support the development of high-quality early education and care programs for all children and provide funding that is disseminated to all programs to support quality by providing funds for professional development, improved staffing standards, and technical assistance in attaining the standards as well as including a funding plan which reflects the actual costs of meeting high quality standards, including subsidies, sliding scales, and parent fees.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation PQ9

A goal of the Department should be to provide inclusive programs where special education services are delivered in the environment that is the most beneficial for the child.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation PQ10

Design a Memorandum of Understanding to assure that standards used to assess quality in programs outside of the auspices of the Department of Early Education and Care are compatible with these standards.

[Subcommittee recommendation PQ11 modified and moved to end of full Committee recommendations]

D. Program Service Delivery

I. Scope and Content of Agency

Recommendation SD1

The new department shall include a mixed system of early education and care programs, before-school and after-school programs, and out-of-school time programs serving children birth through fourteen years, and through sixteen years for children with special needs.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD2

In addition, the administration of school-age (after-school and out-of-school time) programs shall fall under the new Department of Early Education and Care, and the Department of Early Education and Care shall pursue further study on the issues of the extended school day and after-school programming; continued and increasing interdepartmental and local partnerships between community-based providers of services and public and non-public schools is strongly encouraged.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD3

Subsidies and private licensing for kindergarten programs shall move from the Office of Child Care Services to the Department of Early Education and Care while public kindergartens continue to be administered through the Department of Education.

Recommendation SD4

The Department of Early Education and Care shall have oversight of integrated preschool programs currently operated by public school systems under the Department of Education. The two Departments shall collaborate to ensure all obligations related to special education under federal and state laws are met.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD5

The Department of Early Education and Care shall have oversight of all programs currently at the Office of Child Care Services and the Department of Education Early Learning Services serving ages birth through five, and ensure there are interdepartmental agreements in place to address areas of overlap between agency programs.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD6

To reduce fragmentation, the Department of Early Education and Care and the Department of Public Health jointly shall explore ways to bring Early Intervention under its authority without jeopardizing Early Intervention's funding sources, and shall report its recommendations to the appropriate committees of the General Court, including but not limited to the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means, by December 31, 2005.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD7

The new agency shall include licensing in its functions and shall develop and implement uniform licensing standards for all Department of Early Education and Care programs and residential care.

[Modified by full Committee]

II. Streamlining and Coordination of the Early Education and Care System

Recommendation SD8

The Department of Early Education and Care shall have a role for state, regional and local entities that embraces and supports the mixed system—potentially including, but not limited to, local and regional offices and local councils on early education and care. [Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD9

The Department of Early Education and Care shall prioritize and develop an appropriate balance between funding for services including, but not limited to, direct services, workforce and professional development, and quality enhancement. The Department shall streamline the purchasing of direct services and address equity concerns across communities.

[Modified by full Committee]

[Recommendation SD10 deleted by full Committee]

Recommendation SD11

Legislation should be developed to provide that medical services during school time for children over age three shall be coverable through third party billing of private medical insurers

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD12

To provide for continuity of services, the fiscal year 2006 budget for the Department of Early Education and Care shall:

- provide for the continued purchasing of services to children through vouchers, contracts and grants, while the Board of Early Education and Care makes decisions about the future purchasing of direct service
- minimally maintain current funding levels for all of the existing early education and care and school-age programs and services, in addition to any funding identified for newly created programs

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD13

In the system of subsidy eligibility and intake, there shall be:

- uniform eligibility requirements
 - o an annual eligibility determination across the board
 - o the same sliding fee scale
 - o the same documentation required, which shall be as minimal as possible under federal funding regulations
- multiple methods of subsidy intake, such as different means (internet, phone, paper, etc.) and different locations (local and regional), including local offices of the Department of Transitional Assistance

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD14

The income eligibility level for all subsidies shall be raised with new monies over time to 125% of state median income (SMI), with a sliding fee scale revised to ensure affordability. Those currently in the system shall be grandfathered to stay in it up through that income level and the entry level shall be adjusted to 85% of SMI, then eligibility will increase over four years, by 10% each year to 125% of SMI. Low income and extremely at-risk families should have priority.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD15

Subsidy reimbursement rates shall be set to reflect the current market rate to support high-quality education and care and to help ensure parent choice.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD16

Policies of the Department of Early Education and Care shall create defined and articulated interagency agreements to maximize ease of transition between Early Intervention, preschool, and kindergarten services for families and children.

Recommendation SD17

The Department of Early Education and Care shall foster collaborations and coordination among programs and services within and outside of the agency serving children within the age range of the agency.

III. Universal Preschool Program

Recommendation SD20

The goal of the universal preschool program is to prepare all children for school, to provide that all children enter school on an even playing field.

[Moved by full Committee]

Recommendation SD18

Phasing in of the universal preschool program shall build on the earlier recommendation around uniform and expanded eligibility for subsidy programs. (See SD14.) That

recommendation raises eligibility for all subsidy programs to 125% of the state median income (SMI) in the fourth year of implementation. For the purposes of universal preschool, eligibility for three and four year olds shall then continue to increase over time in the following increments:

- Year 5: 140% of SMI
- Year 6: 155% of SMI
- Year 7: 170% of SMI
- Year 8: 185% of SMI
- Year 9: 200% of SMI
- Year 10: universal eligibility

Recommendation SD19

The universal preschool program should use a sliding fee scale consistent with the one used for other subsidy programs, but expanded to at least 200% of state median income and revised to ensure affordability.

[Modified by full Committee]

[Recommendation SD20 moved to beginning of this section.]

Recommendation SD21

Universal preschool should be delivered through the existing mixed system of programs and providers.

General Recommendation

Combine the current advisory groups, including the Department of Education Early Childhood Advisory Council and the Early Education and Care Advisory Committee, into a new ongoing advisory committee to the new Department of Early Education and Care.

[Modified by full Committee from PQ11]

VIII. Subcommittee Findings and Recommendations

A. Workforce Development

Current State Policy

The early education and care workforce in Massachusetts has been involved in numerous initiatives that support their professional development. Currently, there is not a comprehensive statewide vision and plan set forth that unites the workforce and provides a consistent framework. The three state agencies providing the majority of the services for children and requiring professional development for the workforce are:

- The Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services
- The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, and
- The Massachusetts Department of Education

The Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services

The Office of Child Care Services (OCCS) certifies child care professionals and provides a career ladder for teachers, lead teachers, and directors. OCCS regulations require that all child care providers participate in training to enhance their skills and stay up-to-date in the education and development of young children. OCCS collaborated in the implementation of the U.S. Department of Labor's Apprenticeship Program. OCCS funds a statewide network of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies that offer training to child care professionals. Additionally, OCCS oversees the *Quality Child Care Fund* which is supported by the "Invest in Children" license plate—the first-of-its-kind in the nation to support early education and care. Funds raised from the sale of the license plates are used to improve the quality of programs by including professional development opportunities for the workforce.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health administers the Early Intervention program across the state. These programs "provide comprehensive, integrated services, utilizing a family centered approach, to facilitate the developmental progress of eligible children between the ages of birth to three years old. Eligible children are those children who have a specific diagnosed condition or whose development is delayed, or who are at risk for developmental delays due to certain biological and/or environmental factors" (Massachusetts Department of Public Health Early Intervention Services – Operational Standards, 2003). The Department of Public Health has a system of certification for all professional staff members providing direct services.

The Massachusetts Department of Education

Early Learning Services (ELS), within the Department of Education (DOE), administers a number of initiatives that support the early education and care workforce. A few are described below:

- Community Partnerships for Children programs (CPCs) are state-funded, comprehensive early education and care programs for preschool-aged children provided in a variety of settings. CPCs are locally based collaboratives which offer working families accessible, affordable, quality programs.
- Building Careers provides federally funded grants to twenty three institutions of higher education that offer early childhood degrees. The grant provides support for early education and care teachers working in CPCs to matriculate into degree programs and receive tuition assistance for up to four courses; career counseling, academic support, and work-site observation and supervision. A project that ended in June 2004, Advancing the Field, should be noted here. Approximately 800 early education and care professionals were enrolled in programs in twenty one institutions of higher education and/or training agencies. They completed courses leading to certifications and/or Associate and Bachelors degrees.
- The NAEYC Associate Degree Program Accreditation Project is a collaborative effort between DOE and NAEYC. NAEYC has developed a system to accredit associate degree early childhood education programs. Selected institutions of higher education in Massachusetts will receive technical assistance from NAEYC as they implement the first year of the new accreditation system.

To facilitate the ongoing development of workforce initiatives, as well as other activities and programs, collaborations among the three aforementioned agencies exist with the following organizations:

The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education has developed an Early Childhood Transfer Compact (Appendix B). The Compact facilitates the transfer of students from a community college to a four-year public institution of higher education in a specific teacher preparation program. The Early Childhood Education Compact:

- specifies coursework that fulfills OCCS professional child care qualifications for certification as Lead Teacher
- prepares students for entry into a bachelor's degree program approved for Early Childhood Education "Route One" licensure (DOE-required)
- guarantees admission to the Early Childhood Education licensure program at Massachusetts state colleges or university campuses offering Early Childhood Education licensure at the baccalaureate level
- guarantees that 60 credits earned by students who fulfill the core requirements and other provisions of the compact will be accepted as transfer credits by the receiving institution and applied to the students' baccalaureate degrees.

Institutions of Higher Education in Massachusetts offer programs, courses of study, certifications, child development associate credential (CDA) programs, and degrees in early education and care. Each institution provides students with a means of receiving credit for prior learning. This is completed on a case-by-case basis without consistent guidelines across the state.

What's Happening Now in the Field

During the past two decades, educators have learned a great deal about the ability of high-quality early education and care programs to prepare young children for ongoing success. Specifically, well-trained, qualified teachers with a focused curriculum in nationally accredited programs make a substantial difference in preparing young children for school success. How the teacher plans, interacts, guides, supports and works with the child's family effects how the child does later in school (National Research Council, 1998; Marshall et. al. 2001).

Despite the strong base of research, many children in Massachusetts do not have access to high-quality early education and care programs with adequately trained teachers. The Executive Summary of Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers (National Research Council, 2000) identifies several key findings of quality programs for young children, including one informing this subcommittee: The professional development of teachers is related to the quality of early education and care programs, and program quality predicts developmental outcomes for children.

Several studies and ongoing data collection in Massachusetts have provided valuable information regarding early education and care professional development as it relates to child outcomes. DOE commissioned a four-part research study designed to evaluate quality of programs in various early education and care settings. These researchers examined a randomly selected, representative group of early education and care programs—infant and toddler programs, preschool programs, family child care homes, and public preschool programs across the Commonwealth. The Massachusetts Cost and Quality study used the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale-Revised Edition (ECERS-R) to assess quality early education and care programs. There were three major findings of the studies. First, that education is a strong and consistent predictor of quality, particularly in the preschool programs. Second, while a high number of programs are achieving the benchmark of quality associated with positive outcomes in children, the majority of programs in centers and family child care are not. Third, the quality of community-based programs that serve predominantly low-income children is lower than programs that serve more affluent families. This is, again, related to the education of teachers.

Information gathered from the Massachusetts Department of Education provided data related to the numbers of teachers and family child care providers and their relative educational levels. (Early Childhood Indicators and Community Profiles: www.doe.mass.edu/els/research.html).

	Below Associate's Degree	Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree and above	Total
Assistant				
teachers				
Center based programs	6,165	395	948	7,509
Head Start programs	837	28	48	912
Public school preschool programs	1,79	220	540	1,939
				10,360
Teachers and family child care providers				
Center based programs	7,834	3,298	6,261	17,393
Family child care programs	6,687	1,087	2,432	10,206
Head Start programs	404	489	311	1,205
Public school preschool programs			1,339	1,339
Total	14,925	4,874	10,344	30,143
All Teachers (no assistants)	14,925	4,874	10,344	30,143
All Teachers (centers and Head Start only)	8,238	3,787	6,573	18,597

When these data are considered alongside the research that indicates teachers with degrees provide higher quality education to young children, it suggests strongly that the early education and care workforce in Massachusetts should be aggressively involved in professional development opportunities. The data also imply that substantial resources are needed to create effective practices for moving thousands of teachers along their educational trajectories.

National Context (other states, federal)

According to a report from the National Child Care Information Center, thirty-six states and two territories have a formal professional development system plan in place for the

early education and care workforce. This subcommittee reviewed a number of plans while considering the range of programs in Massachusetts serving children birth through school age. Links to a sampling of state professional development plans follow:

- Connecticut Charts-A-Course http://www.ctcharts-a-course.org
- Maine Roads to Quality: Child Care and Early Education Career Development Center
 - http://www.muskie.usm.maine.edu/maineroads
- New Jersey Professional Development Center for Early Care and Education http://www.njpdc.org
- New Mexico Kids: Care Givers/ Educators http://www.newmexicokids.org/Educators

Community Input (testimony) and Findings

Written and oral testimony was received. Major areas of the testimony focused on:

- access to professional development opportunities for all providers (financial, academic, and logistic)
- requirements for licensure/credential/certification
- college degree requirements
- elements of a professional development system particularly compensation, career ladders, and support
- collaboration with institutions of higher education
- ensuring quality
- development of a seamless system from birth through school-age

Discussion and deliberations of subcommittee

The workforce development subcommittee met with a charge to address the following question:

What is needed to support the education, training, and compensation of the early education and care workforce? Specific activities of the subcommittee were to:

- review current and recent research and reports
- consider continuity of education and care for children birth through school age
- consider workforce turnover issues

To address these issues, the Workforce subcommittee organized its work around two central themes:

- elements of a professional development system
- licensing/credentials/certification

Research and reports provided the members of the subcommittee with resources upon which to draw. Additionally, members reviewed existing professional development systems that are being implemented in a number of states. The members discussed a

number of issues related to the development of a system of professional development for the early education and care workforce in Massachusetts and identified specific elements that can be found in the workforce recommendations.

The caliber and stability of the early education and care workforce is critical to the future success of the children in the Commonwealth. Therefore, it is necessary to demand high performance standards and to support the education, training, and compensation of those who provide these services.

Recent research and studies have clearly documented that the educational level and type of training of early education and care providers have a strong impact on the quality of services for children. The National Institute for Early Education Research has published a number of reports that support the fact that a teacher's educational level is linked to quality. (National Institute for Early Education and Research, 2003).

Core competencies are a specific set of knowledge and observable skills that adults working with children should know and be able to do in order to provide high-quality services to children and their families. The core competencies must be integrated into all professional development opportunities and be based upon agreed upon standards. The core competencies should be reflective of the skills and knowledge needed to work with children and families birth through school-age. The subcommittee reviewed several sets of core competencies from other states, as well as those provided by the Massachusetts School-Age Coalition.

Massachusetts has successfully implemented a number of programs that promote collaboration between institutions of higher education, communities, and state agencies to support professional development of the early education and care workforce. Programs such as the Massachusetts Apprenticeship Project, Advancing the Field, and Building Careers have successfully addressed the challenges in meeting the needs of adult learners. These programs have utilized career counseling, mentoring, alternative means of service delivery, and other strategies to accommodate the early education and care workforce. These initiatives are worthy of ongoing study and consideration for further implementation.

Credit should be provided when providers can document attainment of the core competencies through college courses, achieved certificates such as the child development associate credential (CDA), life experience, and/or performance and standardized assessments.

Compensation, recruitment, and retention are overarching issues within the workforce that must be addressed. Research indicates that compensation is linked closely to provision of quality services. Models of compensation such as the T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) Early Childhood® Project should be investigated. Research indicates that early education and care providers stay in the field longer when equitable compensation and benefits are provided. Career counseling is an important

aspect of recruitment and retention. Professionals who work with the providers must have an understanding of the multiple career paths, opportunities, and available services.

Access to professional development opportunities must be facilitated through a number of avenues so that the early education and care workforce can participate in professional development opportunities.

- Financial support must be available to allow the early education and workforce access to higher education opportunities. Consideration should be given to loan forgiveness programs, tuition remission, financial aid, commitment to service, and other approaches.
- Academic support is needed that addresses the unique needs of this workforce. Many early education and care providers have not participated in formal education in many years. They may need a great deal of support to be able to use technology successfully. Additionally, tutoring, writing, and specific academic supports may be needed to ensure that these participants can demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.
- The diversity of the early education and care workforce is commendable and should be supported. Many participants in the workforce speak languages other than English. Supports need to be developed that allow English Language Learners access to and success in English speaking courses. Institutions of higher education as well as other training agencies should study and develop strategies, materials, and supports for accommodating the varied language needs of the workforce.
- Adult learners are the majority of the early education and care workforce. When new standards are set that require additional and focused professional development, accommodations must be made. Flexibility regarding scheduling of classes is important. Institutions of higher education will need to continue to be creative in delivering courses during evenings, week-ends, at places of employment, in cohort models, etc. Additionally, consideration must be given for modes of delivery of courses such as distance learning, on-line components, and traditional face-to-face classes.
- Field experiences and practica must be able to be accomplished or partially accomplished in people's place of employment. The early education and care workforce cannot financially afford to take a leave from their job to fulfill every current practica requirement. Opportunities to document evidence of attainment of core competencies will be crucial in this area.
- The use and integration of lab schools and/or campus early education and care programs should be considered in determining required field experiences. The lab schools serve an important role in preservice coursework and may or may not be appropriate as practica placements for early education and care providers who are employed in other settings. Additionally, vocational technical high schools should be included when looking at programs.

Currently, early education and care providers have licenses, credentials and/or certifications tied directly to the existing agencies of the Office of Child Care Services, the Department of Public Health, and the Department of Education. Regulations,

competencies, and licensing requirements are specific to the credential offered by that agency. Investigation should be done to see if and how a common credential for all early education and care providers that allows for specific training in specialty areas (such as public school, Early Intervention, and school-age programs) could be developed.

Considerable discussion took place among the subcommittee members around the topic of licenses, credentials and/or certifications. It is clear that further study is needed to determine how professional development can be provided and documented so that all early education and care providers attain high-quality competencies.

Subcommittee Recommendations

Recommendation WF1

Develop a <u>comprehensive professional development system</u> that supports the early education and care field (birth through school-age). The system's elements should provide the existing workforce opportunities to transition to higher standards, should improve retention rates, and should attract new recruits to the field of early education and care. At a minimum, the system should reflect leading industry approaches to the following elements:

- Core competencies
- Collaboration in and with higher education
- Credit for prior learning
- Compensation/recruitment/retention
- Access to professional development opportunities
- Professional development registry
- Career ladder

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation WF2

Identify system-wide <u>core competencies</u>—the knowledge and skills needed to provide quality education and care to children (birth through school-age)—that reflect current research and best practices and can be aligned with national, industry and higher-education standards.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation WF3

Facilitate <u>collaboration between higher education institutions</u> and the early education and care workforce to determine professional development needs, to assess institutional capacity to meet needs, to overcome existing barriers in the higher education system and to assist in the development of a professional development registry (see below). Study further the feasibility of designing and enhancing programs such as The Massachusetts Apprenticeship Program, Advancing the Field, and Building Careers.

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation WF4

Develop a statewide system for granting <u>credit for prior learning</u> that is built upon the core competencies and allows students to translate their knowledge and skills into college-level coursework.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation WF5

Design a plan for <u>increased and equitable compensation</u> that reflects uniform higher professional standards, as well as improves recruitment and retention. (Consider new and existing resources such as scholarships, grants, tuition remission, loans and loan forgiveness programs which include service commitment components, and examine models such as the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) program, the WAGE\$ program, and other unique incentive programs).

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation WF6

Facilitate <u>access</u> to higher education and on-going professional development opportunities for all sectors of the early education and care workforce. In particular, accommodate for:

- the limited financial resources of the workforce:
- the need for career counseling;
- the need for general academic and literacy support;
- language barriers found in a diverse workforce;
- the unique needs of adult learners; and
- scheduling and location difficulties.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation WF7

Design a <u>registry</u> (database) that (1) documents the professional development (degrees awarded, courses taken, etc.) of the workforce and allows for accurate and timely assessment of the professional development needs of the workforce and (2) allows easy access to information on state-approved early education and care trainers and training programs.

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation WF8

Establish a comprehensive <u>career ladder</u> or lattice that allows for multiple points of entry, opportunities to move within the field and across settings, programs, and age groups (birth through school-age).

[Modified by full Committee]

II. Licensing/Credentials/Certification

Recommendation WF9:

Study further what license/credentials/certification will be required of teachers in early education and care programs, and what, if any, alternative paths will allow those from other professions or other countries to meet these requirements.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation WF10:

Study further which state department should have oversight of licensing/credentialing/certification and be charged with streamlining the process. [New recommendation created]

B. School Readiness Assessment System

Current State Policy

The Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services (OCCS) requires licensed group child care programs to produce a written progress report on each child's development and progress at least every six months. The Commonwealth does not specify what type of assessment should be used in measuring that progress, but does require programs to make those reports available to parents, to notify parents immediately of any significant developmental problems as soon as they arise, and to have a plan for referring children to appropriate additional services. That plan for referral must include procedures for observing and recording the child's activities and behavior prior to making a referral. [102 CMR 7]

If an infant or toddler is not in a group child care setting, his or her parents may access developmental screening through the Early Intervention program at the Department of Public Health. Early Intervention identifies children under the age of three in need of screening and possibly services through its Child Find initiative. That effort works with caregivers, pediatricians, and others who are likely to spot a developmental delay in a young child to facilitate referral to Early Intervention services.

Every school district in the Commonwealth is required to screen entering kindergartners to review their development and identify children who may need referral to special education services. Kindergarten screening is part of each district's special education plan. In addition, school districts must offer developmental screening to preschool-aged children, although such screening is optional on the part of the parents. Once children are referred to determine eligibility for special education services, the child receives an educational assessment, and an assessment in the developmental areas of concern. [603 CMR 28]

What's Happening Now in the Field

Despite the minimal state requirements related to child screening and especially child assessments for preschool and kindergarten children, many early education and care programs have implemented child assessment systems for the purposes of improving their instruction, identifying children in need of additional services, and documenting the progress of children in their care. In the past several years, some private funders have developed a strong focus on outcome measurement; conducting and documenting child assessments is one way to collect data showing positive outcomes. Programs have selected from a number of published assessment tools and systems and have, in some cases, adapted existing tools or created their own.

OCCS, in conjunction with the United Way of Massachusetts Bay, has launched a School Readiness Indicator Project (SRIP) to learn more about the ways in which the field is conducting assessments and what tools they are using. SRIP is also exploring ways to use the data collected from the child assessments to get a better picture of child-based school

readiness indicators, and how prepared well the Commonwealth's children are when they enter school. SRIP is expected to continue its work, including reviewing existing assessment tools for content and compatibility through spring 2005. [SRIP materials]

National Context (other states, federal)

How to measure school readiness and achievement in young children is being discussed nationally due to (1) the increased demand for accountability around the use of public dollars and (2) the debate about recent implementation of a skills assessment for children in the Head Start program. The new Head Start assessment has raised questions about the ways in which young children's learning can be accurately and appropriately measured, as well as the legitimate use of assessment data in relation to individual children and programs. [Education Commission of the States, *Policy Brief: Early Learning*, March 2003] The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)—the major source of funding for early education and care programs in Massachusetts and elsewhere—does not require child assessments or any measure of school readiness.

In individual states, however, policymakers have created and implemented a number of school readiness assessment systems in an effort to ensure that public schools are ready for the children they serve and to improve the achievement of children when they enter school. Twenty-five states, including Massachusetts, have some type of learning standards. Florida, Maryland, and North Carolina have developed statewide systems that involve individual child assessments. While efforts in most states have focused primarily on kindergarten students, some (for example, the *Maryland Model for School Readiness*) have been implemented in both kindergarten and preschool classrooms.

Community Input (testimony) and Findings

At the public hearings held across the Commonwealth, a number of people gave testimony regarding the components and content of a school readiness assessment system. Some of the common themes in the testimony included:

- An assessment system should cover all developmental domains cognitive, social/emotional, linguistic, and physical.
- Other factors, including child nutrition, should also be considered when developing a school readiness assessment system.
- Any assessment system should build on the Department of Education's Guidelines for Learning Experiences and Early Childhood Program Standards.
- The use of child assessments to evaluate programs should be done cautiously, if at all.
- Child assessment should be conducted in a way that is reliable and developmentally appropriate for the child.

Discussion and deliberations of subcommittee

The charge of the school readiness assessment system subcommittee was to make recommendations in response to the following questions and directives:

What does a school readiness assessment system look like?

- review current and recent research and reports
- consider transitions from early intervention programs and services to preschool programs and services
- consider transitions from preschool programs to public school kindergarten programs and services
- make recommendations including areas for further investigation

The subcommittee approached its work by dividing it into two areas: (1) child assessment and program accountability and (2) transitions between infant/toddler, preschool, and kindergarten programs.

In developing its recommendations, the subcommittee took into consideration testimony submitted at the regional hearings and in writing, current research on assessment and school readiness, and information provided by experts invited to present and answer questions at subcommittee meetings. Invited guests included:

Phil Baimas, Office of Child Care Services
Rod Southwick, Office of Child Care Services
Karen Tewhey, Lowell Public Schools
Vicki Milstein, Brookline Public Schools
Cynthia Maxfield, Nashoba Regional School District
Stephanie Johnson, Associated Early Care and Education Services
Martha McCown, ABCD Head Start

These experts from the field spoke to subcommittee members about statewide efforts to create and measure school readiness indicators, community-based efforts to measure school readiness among local children, and program-level child assessment systems.

The subcommittee framed its recommendations by establishing principles and acceptable purposes of a school readiness assessment system (included in recommendations below) to shape its more detailed recommendation regarding the content and implementation of a system.

Although the subcommittee agreed on many principles, purposes, and recommendations, it was not able to make a strong recommendation regarding the aggregation of data collected through child assessments and screenings. Subcommittee members raised several concerns about the use of aggregated data, including:

- if data is used to evaluate the effectiveness of individual service providers, that use may compromise the reliability of data collected in the classroom
- aggregated child assessment data could provide a snapshot of the level of achievement of children in a given program, but it does not show the progress made by children in that program
- data aggregated by community could fail to take into account demographic socioeconomic factors affecting the performance of children in different areas

In the end, subcommittee members did not make a recommendation around the use of aggregated child assessment or screening data, but recommended further study around the question. Yet the subcommittee members were very aware of the desire to use assessment as one form of accountability for publicly funded programs and services. In further investigating the use of aggregated data for accountability purposes, the Board of Early Education and Care might explore some of the following potential guidelines discussed by subcommittee members:

- ensuring that assessments are conducted by trained assessors with established inter-rater reliability
- basing evaluations of state programs on a data collected from a random sample of children from throughout the Commonwealth
- ensuring that system of accountability does not make public results for individual children
- aligning program evaluation with state curriculum guidelines
- providing useful data about child outcomes while avoiding using data for highstakes decisions about individual children or programs

Subcommittee Recommendations

I. Principles of a School Readiness Assessment System

Recommendation SRA1

The School Readiness Assessment System shall:

- be among the primary functions of the Department of Early Education and Care, and shall be a freestanding, high level, and visible function within the agency
- work toward accountability and quality improvement over time
- include multiple components that are coordinated, but meet different needs, including a program assessment piece consistent with the recommendations of the Program Quality subcommittee
- be designed to benefit children
- consider progress in all developmental domains
- apply to entire Early Education and Care system (all ages and settings)
- include resources for training and technical assistance
- be aligned with state-established learning standards, curriculum guidelines, and developmental benchmarks
- use tools for assessment and screening that are reliable, valid, and culturally and linguistically appropriate

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation SRA2

Acceptable purposes of a School Readiness Assessment System include:

- Instructional (adjustments to curriculum to meet learning guidelines)
- communication with parents and kindergarten programs
- identify children who need additional services
- evaluate how program is meeting goals (Accountability)

[Consensus of full Committee]

II. Child Assessment

Recommendation SRA3

<u>Principles of an Effective Child Assessment System include:</u>

- draws information from multiple sources
- conducted in the child's natural setting, based on observation by teachers or others familiar with the children
- conducted by highly trained assessors, very familiar with the instrument(s) used
- uses a limited variety of tools, which collect consistent information and are approved by the Department of Early Education and Care

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SRA4

While it will take a great amount of resources, ideally <u>all programs working with preschool-age children would ultimately do child assessment</u>, and programs would be supported in that effort with the necessary workforce development and other resources. [Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation SRA5

<u>Teachers can best assess</u> children in their natural setting, which in the case of an early childhood program is the child's classroom or family child care home.

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation SRA6

The state shall <u>use purchasing power with identified vendors</u> to maximize resources and ensure alignment with learning guidelines.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SRA7

The Department of Early Education and Care shall <u>provide start-up and ongoing materials</u>, training, and technical assistance, and assume the costs of these requirements; the Department's budget shall provide for a well-resourced school-readiness assessment system.

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation SRA8

The results of child assessments shall <u>not be used for "high stakes" decisions</u> regarding individual children or programs.

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation SRA9

Because a child's age is an important variable in considering school-readiness, the Board of Education shall <u>standardize kindergarten entry-age</u> across the Commonwealth to September 1, with a phase in plan for those districts not currently using that date. [Modified by full Committee]

III. Child Screening

Recommendation SRA10

Screening in all developmental domains shall take place at entry to preschool programs (consistent with Head Start requirements to screen within 45 calendar days of entry) and regularly thereafter.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SRA11

The Board shall review and approve several developmental screening tools that are widely accepted and research-based for use within programs. Although there can be several tools, they shall capture roughly the same information. The Board and Department shall provide technical assistance to support communities trying to develop a single screening tool.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SRA12

In implementing the screening, <u>early education and care programs may collaborate with their Lead Educational Agency or others</u> to create a community-wide screening process. [Modified by full Committee]

IV. Transition of Children Between Infant and Toddler Programs, Preschool, and Kindergarten

Recommendation SRA13

Guiding Principles for Transitions

- foster relationships as resources
- promote continuity (e.g., align curriculum, standards, guidelines and assessments)
- focus on family strengths and support and interactions with schools
- tailor practice to individual needs
- form collaborative relationships across programs

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation SRA14

Transitions must be based on a <u>strength-based model</u> where folders are not simply transferred from one teacher to another. The <u>family</u> must be involved and <u>actual verbal</u> <u>contact between the early childhood program and kindergarten teacher</u> shall be required. [Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SRA15

The Board and Department shall develop a <u>parent consent form</u> for assessment information, which will be used at the time of enrollment in an early education and care program. The form will give permission for an early education and care program to share information with the child's new school at time of kindergarten entry. While parents will still retain control over whether assessment information gets shared it should be built into the process. If a parent consents to having the information shared, it will be

automatically forwarded by the early childhood program. The last progress report of the year – before a child enters kindergarten -- will include a reminder of the consent and will be a time for a transition plan to be jointly developed by the parent and the provider. [Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation SRA16

Early childhood programs shall include <u>transitions as part of their curriculum</u> for children.

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation SRA17

The Board and Department of Early Education and Care and the Board and Department of Education shall jointly develop a <u>policy plan on successful transitions to kindergarten from home or early childhood programs</u>. The plan shall include any policy or regulatory changes necessary to ensure smooth transitions. The policy plan will be based on best practices and research on early childhood assessment and successful transitions and shall:

- take advantage of key opportunities throughout the year prior to kindergarten entry to integrate transitions into kindergarten
- include adequate exposure for children and families -- to the kindergarten environment before entry and involve of families early and regularly in transition planning
- require every preschool program and every school (public or private) to ensure smooth transitions to kindergarten
- identify or specify the role of communities and local councils in developing a transition plan for all children in a community
- be based on the recognition that transitions are sensitive times for parents and children

[Modified by full Committee]

V. Implementation

Recommendation SRA18

In the development of the workforce development system, the Board and Department shall recognize and incorporate the need for early educators to be well-trained and comfortable with any school readiness assessment system. Course work, professional development trainings, core competencies and potentially minimum teacher qualifications and certification should all incorporate the need for familiarity with early childhood observation and assessment.

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation SRA19

As the Department of Early Education and Care is created, the Board shall ensure that the principles and recommendations outlined above are incorporated into the licensing, regulations, and operating policies of the Department to guide its work.

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation SRA20

The Board of Early Education and Care shall build on and consider the work and findings of the School Readiness Indicator Project (SRIP) working subcommittee on early childhood assessments, and the recommendations of this subcommittee shall be submitted to the SRIP working subcommittee on early childhood assessments to inform its work.

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation SRA21

The timeline for implementing these School Readiness Assessment Recommendations shall follow the following recommended order, and shall be completed not later than calendar year 2008:

- 1. development of approved developmental benchmarks, learning standards and curriculum guidelines for all age groups, beginning with ages three and four
- 2. look at what programs are currently using, and if appropriate use and build on findings of School Readiness Indicator Project
- 3. evaluation and piloting of assessment tools
- 4. selection of assessment tools
- 5. customization of tools (working with vendors where appropriate)
- 6. pilot tools in different demographic populations
- 7. full roll-out of tools first to programs serving three and four-year-olds, then to all age groups
- 8. initial and ongoing evaluation of School Readiness Assessment System [Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SRA22

The implementation of this Committee's recommendations regarding a system of child screening shall take place simultaneously to the implementation timeline outlined in Recommendation SRA21, and should take place in the following order:

- 1. identifying acceptable screening tools
- 2. training workforce and programs on screening tools
- 3. changing regulations to include regular screening, and screening at entry to programs
- 4. establish and approved referral process for children who have needs identified through screening
- 5. implement new screening requirements at re-licensing visit for individual programs

[Consensus of full Committee]

VI. Areas for further study

Recommendation SRA23

The Department of Early Education and Care and its Board shall study and make recommendations related to the use of aggregated data collected through individual child assessments and child screenings. These recommendations should include direction as to

the type of data that can or shall be aggregated, and whether it can or shall be aggregated at the program, community, or statewide level. [Modified by full Committee]

C. Program Quality

Current State Policy

Massachusetts currently utilizes various instruments to assess and/or monitor program quality. The Department of Education utilizes the National Association for the Education of Young Children Accreditation system in the Community Partnership for Children programs (CPCs). Additionally, CPCs participate in periodic surveys that collect data on issues related to quality. The Office of Child Care Services utilizes the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) in some of their licensed programs. A number of family child care programs use the National Association of Family Child Care Accreditation system.

What's Happening Now in the Field

Much of what relates to program quality is directly connected to workforce development. Issues such as education and compensation are seen as key indicators of quality. Please refer to the workforce development section above for a complete analysis of this issue. DOE's Early Childhood Program Standards for Three and Four Year Olds are currently being used in CPC programs and are being looked at in other programs as well. Head Start programs continue to use the Head Start standards. More family child care programs are using the National Family Child Care Accreditation System and efforts are underway in Massachusetts to develop our own standards for family child care programs.

National Context (other states, federal)

Nationally, a number of instruments are being utilized to define and assess quality of programs:

- National Association for the Education of Young Children Accreditation system
- National Association of Family Child Care Accreditation system
- Head Start Program Review Instrument for Systems monitoring of Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees

A number of states are utilizing a "star" or "tiered" system of rating quality; often tying quality to reimbursement rates.

Community Input (testimony) and Findings

The following points summarize major themes gathered from public testimony:

- indicators of quality should be comprehensive and involve the family
- determination of quality should be made locally
- various accreditation/monitoring tools are currently being used such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children Accreditation system, the National Association of Family Child Care Accreditation system, and the Head Start Program Review Instrument for Systems monitoring of Head Start and

Early Head Start Grantees and should continue to be looked at for possible continuation

- college degrees are related to quality
- the Early Childhood Program Standards by DOE should be used
- reduce duplication of assessment and monitoring systems

Discussion and deliberations of subcommittee

The program quality subcommittee met with a charge to address the following question:

How, when, and by whom is quality determined? Specific activities of the subcommittee were to:

- identify independent evaluation models currently being used in Massachusetts programs
- consider what other states are using or considering
- make recommendations

The subcommittee readily agreed upon the premise that their work would focus on quality indicators and tools that assess <u>programs</u> and not include assessments that were linked to individual children. To address these issues, the program quality subcommittee organized its work around a central theme—the development of high quality standards and use of a tool that evaluates those identified standards.

The subcommittee reviewed and discussed existing standards that are being used in Massachusetts including:

- The Early Childhood Program Standards for Three and Four Year Olds
- Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences
- Head Start Standards

The subcommittee also reviewed existing instruments that monitor and assess quality. Among them were:

- The National Association for the Education of Young Children Accreditation Instrument
- The Program Review Instrument for Systems Monitoring of Head Start and Early Head Start Grantees (PRISM)
- The National Association for Family Child Care Accreditation

It will be important to have all programs (family child care, center-based and public school) and all age groups (infants/toddlers, preschool and school age) utilize a consistent set of standards that vary only in those categories related to the age group served or the specific program type.

The subcommittee strongly supported the notion that one single instrument should be used for all programs. This would avoid duplication and provide a consistent framework for evaluation and technical assistance. It will take time for one single instrument to be

developed. Until that time, it is recommended that the Department of Early Education and Care identify an existing instrument (s) to use.

The subcommittee lauds the development and implementation of the DOE's Early Childhood Program Standards and the use of other instruments. The Standards and DOE's Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences provide models for collaboration among and integration of multiple state departments and national organizations. Now that preschool has been addressed, it is recommended that priority be given to other programs and age groups in the development of standards, particularly to family child care programs.

The subcommittee deliberated extensively about the benefits and challenges of having the same people within the Department of Early Education and Care provide services for licensing of programs and provide technical assistance. We concluded that it would be most advantageous to have a single person fill both roles if staff promoted positive relationships and punitive measures were not employed. Rather, a positive relationship could build supportive relationships so that a single staff member could work with a program to improve quality. Additionally, the Department of Early Education and Care should have a registry of approved consultants to provide specific expertise in particular areas.

A group of members within the subcommittee met with representatives of family child care systems to discuss specific issues. Family child care providers present unique challenges to the early education and care workforce. An example of required standards has been developed by an interested group of providers. They follow as an example for consideration.

- 1. Increase minimum license standard to include the items below.
 - a. High school diploma or GED
 - b. Twenty-two hours of training
 - i. 5 hours in child growth and development
 - ii. 5 hours in curriculum development
 - iii. 5 hours of guidance and discipline
 - iv. 5 hours of parent communication/relationship
 - v. 2 hours of business practice
- 2. Additional "steps along the ladder" will be developed that include CDA, AA, BA, and MA:
 - a. Program Director:
 - i. AA in early education and care or related field after 3 years
 - ii. BA in early education and care or related field after 7 years
 - b. Family Child Care Coordinator (Home Visitor)
 - i. AA in early education and care or related field after 3 years

With consensus of the full Advisory Committee, these recommendations were moved to the workforce section.

Subcommittee members reviewed a number of systems that utilize a "star" or "medal" approach to ranking the quality of programs. Although there has been considerable

success and favorable response to such systems, a plan developed by Richard Brandon and his colleagues from the Human Services Policy Center at the University of Washington, was determined to be the most favorable one to consider for our purposes in Massachusetts. (Brandon, 2004). This plan identifies two "layers" of support for high-quality programs. Layer 1 is for quality enhancement while Layer 2 is for funding sources.

For Level 1, all programs would receive money for quality enhancement regardless of population. Amounts would be determined based on standards for staff, professional development needs of teachers, and accreditation/meeting of standards needs. Each program would identify staffing standards, student-teacher ratios, compensation and staff professional development needs. Money would be provided based on the needs of teachers (e.g., courses and academic supports), the current educational level (e.g., CDA, AA, and BA) and accreditation support (e.g., technical assistance and materials).

For Level 2, <u>all</u> programs will receive funds to provide direct services to income-eligible families. Subsidies will be based on the financial needs of the families being serving.

Massachusetts has a long and successful history of including children with disabilities in public schools and community-based early education and care programs. DOE designed a joint early childhood teacher certification in 1990 that integrated competencies in early childhood regular and special education so that all teachers would be prepared to teach all young children in a variety of settings. OCCS offers training to teachers regarding special education. The subcommittee felt strongly that initiatives that continue to facilitate inclusion of children with disabilities into early education and care programs under the auspices of the new department should continue.

The subcommittee recognizes that programs in departments other than the Department of Early Education and Care will provide some services to young children. It is recommended that specific agreements be developed so that information can be shared and services provided in a seamless fashion.

The subcommittee would like to offer its services beyond the scope of the Advisory Committee and be permitted to continue its efforts. The full Committee ultimately felt strongly that an advisory group to the Department of Early Education and Care should be developed that builds upon the strengths of this Committee as well as the existing DOE Early Childhood Advisory Council.

Definitions of quality abound, but there is general agreement that quality in early education and care means comprehensive services for children and includes programs that promote children's cognitive growth, meets their physical needs (including medical and nutritional needs), supports their social and emotional development (including mental health needs) and engages families. Quality programs help ensure that children are prepared to succeed in school not only by teaching basic concepts and skills but by assisting children to manage many other developmental tasks.

Subcommittee Recommendations

Recommendation PQ1 – Standards for Programs

Develop a single document that will have consistent goals, philosophy, and guiding principles for all programs (infant/toddler, preschool {center based and public school}, family child care, and school-age child care) with separate sections for standards related to each specific program. Existing documents, such as the Head Start Standards and the Massachusetts Early Childhood Standards will be incorporated into the instrument to ensure that all current best practices and regulations are being incorporated.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation PQ2 – Tool for using the Standards to evaluate program quality

Develop an instrument which will be based on the standards and will be used as the single assessment tool for all programs. It will include a self-evaluation, written documentation, and observable components. Data will be gathered from families, administrators, staff, and validators. Parent and staff interviews, record review, and use of random selection will be employed. In the case of Head Start programs, the PRISM will continue to be utilized in lieu of the new instrument. If the program is evaluated as deficient, the new instrument will be used for technical assistance as appropriate. [Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation PQ3 – Tools during transition time

<u>Utilize existing instruments</u> currently being used (NAEYC Accreditation, ECERS, National Association of Family Child Care) until the new instrument is developed and implemented, will continue.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation PQ4 – Ongoing development of Standards

Support the ongoing <u>development of standards for family child care programs</u> being planned for by the Office of Child Care Services, the Department of Education, and experts in the field.

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation PQ5 – *Development of Standards*

Develop standards for infant/toddler and school-age programs.

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation PQ6 – Functions of licensing and technical assistance

<u>Initiate a "culture of supportive excellence"</u> where oversight and regulatory procedures are delivered in a positive way to improve quality.

Further study is needed to determine the most efficient and beneficial way to implement licensing and technical assistance. Discussions focused on the effectiveness of having the same people who license and monitor programs, provide technical assistance and/or consultation.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation PQ7– Professional development requirements for family child care providers

<u>Enhance licensing standards for family child care providers</u> that include increased hours of training in specific areas, linkage to college degrees, and increase in compensation commensurate with development.

[Moved to workforce section by full Committee]

Recommendation PQ8 – Promoting Quality in all Early Education and Care Programs

Implement a plan that promotes quality based on high standards. It is recommended that the model designed by Richard Brandon, entitled *Parent and Provider Assistance Package* be adopted.

This plan is comprised of a two layer system that supports the development of high-quality early education and care for all children. The first layer provides funding that is disseminated to **all** programs to support quality by providing funds for:

<u>Staffing Standards</u> (qualifications, child:adult ratios, and compensation)

<u>Professional Development</u> (funds for tuition, expenses, and release time)

Accreditation Assistance (support in meeting the Standards)

The second layer provides a funding plan in which rates reflect the actual costs of meeting the high quality standards. Included in that are:

Provider subsidy (full subsidy)

<u>Income-related subsidy</u> (remaining costs of program for children of age or income not covered by Provider Subsidy. Additionally, a sliding scale payment based on income is included)

<u>Parent Fees</u> (co-payments for remainder of costs, minus subsidy or sliding-scale subsidy. Families above the income eligibility limit would pay the full cost of tuition.)

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation PO9– *Inclusive practices and natural environments*

<u>Deliver all services must be in the child's natural environment</u>. Special education must be delivered in that context. Inclusive programs serving children with and without disabilities have increased in Massachusetts. The subcommittee recommends that this practice continue and be enhanced so that all children receive the services and supports they need within the context of the early education and care program they regularly attend.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation PQ10 – *Collaboration with other agencies*

Design a <u>Memorandum of Understanding</u> to assure that standards used to assess quality in programs outside of the auspices of the Department of Early Education and Care are compatible with these standards.

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation PQ11 - continuation of subcommittee

Allow the current <u>subcommittee</u> will <u>serve</u> as an <u>advisory committee</u> to the new Board of Early Education and Care and be given permission to flesh out details to the aforementioned recommendations.

[Modified and moved to end of full Committee recommendations]

D. Program Service Delivery

Current State Policy

The delivery of early education and care services in Massachusetts has developed over time to meet the requirements of federal funding and in response to the addition of new state funding streams.

There are currently two state-level agencies delivering the bulk of early education and care services in Massachusetts:

- The Office of Child Care Services (under the Executive Office of Health and Human Services); and
- The Department of Education

Other significant services are provided by other state agencies (e.g., DPH's Early Intervention program)

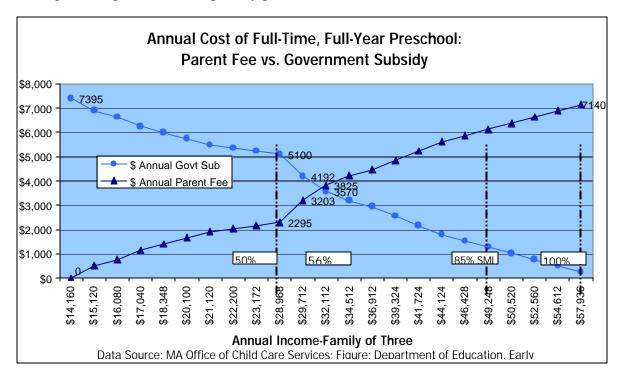
Office of Child Care Services

Approximately 228,000 children ages birth to 14 (16 with special needs) are served by programs licensed under the Office of Child Care Services (OCCS), including over 115,000 in group child care, over 45,000 in school-age child care, and approximately 64,000 in home-based family child care. OCCS administers approximately 120,000 subsidies for early education and care through a combination of contracted subsidized slots and a voucher system. OCCS contracts directly with 260 providers across the state, and manages its voucher subsidies through a statewide network of 14 Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. Programs providing child care services receive a reimbursement rate set regionally, which ranges between the 40th and 70th percentile of the market rate. [Massachusetts Child Care and Development Fund State Plan for 2004-2005] About five percent of the OCCS budget in fiscal year 2005 is slated for licensing and administration.

In fiscal year 2004, OCCS spent approximately \$357 million in state and federal dollars on child care administration and subsidies. [Associated Early Care and Education Budget Analysis, July 2004] Of that, approximately \$288 million were federal Child Care and Development Fund (\$103.8 million), and TANF dollars (approximately \$92 million direct and \$92 million transferred into the Child Care and Development Fund). [Massachusetts Child Care and Development Fund State Plan for 2004-2005, Associated Analysis]

OCCS uses the funds outlined above to provide child care subsidies for families receiving or transitioning off assistance from the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), families whose incomes are between 50% and 85% of the state median income (SMI), teen parents, and families engaged in Department of Social Services (DSS) family preservation efforts ("supportive child care"). Eligibility is determined based on documentation provided by the family at the point of service or at one of the regional resource and referral agencies, and is re-evaluated every six months. As of September

2004, there were 13, 841 children on the waiting list for OCCS subsidized child care statewide. [OCCS Waiting for Subsidized Child Care in Massachusetts, September 2004] Parents receiving subsidies pay a portion of the cost of care based on a sliding fee scale. The following graph, provided by the Department of Education, illustrates the change in the portion of cost paid by parents as their income increases:



Department of Education

Through its Office of Early Learning Services (ELS), the Department of Education manages a number of grant programs supporting children, their families, and early education and care programs. These include:

- Early Childhood Mental Health Project
- Early Childhood Special Education Allocation Grants
- Exploring the Options for Children with Autism
- Early Education and Care Continuation Grants
- Massachusetts Family Network
- Community Partnerships for Children
- Massachusetts Head Start Expansion Grant
- Massachusetts Head Start Supplemental Salary Grant
- Quality Full-Day Kindergarten
- Parent-Child Home Program

Among these programs, the Community Partnerships for Children Program (CPC) is the primary program providing early education and care to young children. The CPC program provides program subsidies for three-year-old and four-year-old children, program quality support, and other services through 168 local community-based councils

in 336 towns and cities. The program provides program subsidies for approximately 21,000 three-year olds and four-year olds in a mix of center-based, Head Start, public, and family child care settings.

The CPC program distributes its funding in the form of grants to lead agencies, which are managed on the local level by community-based councils. Reimbursement rates for CPC subsidies are established at the local level and are typically higher than those established by OCCS. State budget language limits local administrative expenditures for CPC to eight percent of the grant amount.

In fiscal year 2005, the CPC program is funded at a level of \$68.6 million, out of a total budget of about \$104 million for Early Learning Services grant programs. State expenditures on this program assist in accessing federal TANF matching dollars.

The Community Partnerships for Children program provides subsidies for preschool-aged children living in families whose incomes are below 125% of the state median income (SMI) whose parents are employed. Local CPCs must give priority to children who are on the waitlist for OCCS subsidies. Local CPC councils and providers establish eligibility based on documentation provided by the family and re-evaluates eligibility annually. Parents pay a portion of the cost of care based on the same sliding fee scale as described above and used by OCCS.

In addition, the Department of Education acts as the state fiscal agent for the federal 21st Century Community Schools grant program, which provided \$8 million in federal funding in fiscal year 2005 to 28 school districts. Grant awards range from \$50,000 to \$850,000. According to DOE, these grants "enable 28 recipients and their partnering organizations to provide children and youth in grades K-12 with after-school and summer academic enrichment opportunities along with youth development programs that complement and support regular academic programming." [DOE website]

The state-funded After School and Out of School Time Grant Program, which was also administered by the Department of Education, has not received appropriations since fiscal year 2004 due to budget constraints.

Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded nationwide program of preschool education and comprehensive services for low-income three and four year olds. Services to children and families include health, nutritional, social services and referrals. Head Start programs also include mandatory parent involvement and education, which builds parents skills and experience. To be eligible for Head Start, a child's family must have an income at or below the federal poverty level. There are currently an estimated 163 Head Start programs in Massachusetts serving 12,000 children. [Department of Education, Early Learning Services data] While the majority of Head Start programs are part-day, some have extended the day for children by combining funding sources.

What's Happening Now in the Field

The differences between subsidy programs in DOE and OCCS has in some ways shaped practice within the field of early education and care. Variations between the two agencies in terms of eligibility, program and reporting requirements and subsidy reimbursements have been a dhallenge to providers who choose to participate in both OCCS and DOE programs. According to DOE, approximately 141 Head Start programs, 1,252 center-based programs, 247 public school programs and 1,052 family child care providers participate in local CPCs by serving subsidized children. Additionally, an estimated 78% (1,800) of all center and Head Start programs, 49% (5,000) of all family child care providers and 49% (300) of all public school preschool programs receive trainings, materials, and accreditation support through their local CPC councils.

Many programs participate in the subsidy programs administered by both agencies, combining funding streams to maximize the number of children served. Some Head Start programs combine funding streams as well in an effort to provide full-day, full-year care. In addition, state policy currently allows providers manage multiple funding streams without disrupting services to children. For example, children subsidized through the CPC program receive priority for OCCS-subsidized services when they age out of their CPC-supported preschool programs.

Other providers choose not to participate in subsidized early education and care delivery, even if it is a need in their communities, for various reasons which may include:

- reimbursement rates that are lower than they can charge private paying parents
- program requirements (e.g. CPC requirement that programs be nationally accredited)
- insufficient capacity (program is full with private paying families)
- limited resources to access and manage state subsidies; limited access to state contracts

Regardless of their participation in state subsidy programs, all group and family child care programs, except those run by school systems, have contact with the Office of Child Care Services through its licensing division. Massachusetts has strong licensing and regulatory standards for early education and care programs, and enforces them with regular licensing visits.

National Context (other states, federal)

Governance

According to the National Child Care Information Center, the overwhelming number of Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) grantees are offices or departments within state Human Services or Social Services agencies. Only one state, California, listed its Education agency as the grantee for CCDF in its FY 2004-2005 State Plan. A handful of states listed alternative state agencies, including the Partnership for School Readiness (FL), the Bureau of Child Development (IN), the Children Youth and Families

Department (NM), and the Office of Children and Family Services (NY). [National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC) report on CCDF State Plans]

However, when it comes to the delivery of state-funded pre-kindergarten initiatives, several states – including Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, and New York – administer those programs separately out of their state education agencies. In this sense Massachusetts has not been unique in its separation of programs serving preschoolaged children. [NCCIC report on Pre-K Initiatives]

Service Delivery

According to the federal. Child Care Bureau:

"The federal Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) provides \$4.8 billion in block grants to States, Territories, and Tribes to subsidize the cost of child care for low-income families. Eligible families must meet certain income requirements and must need child care so they can work or participate in approved training or education. Income thresholds may vary from State to State, but by statute eligibility for CCDF-funded assistance is limited to families with incomes at or below 85 percent of State Median Income (SMI). Typically, eligible families pay a fee or co-payment directly to the provider, who also receives a reimbursement from the State."

While every state accepting federal CCDF dollars for early education and child care services is required to offer parents the choice of a voucher-based subsidy, about half of the states in 2002 also had some sort of contracted subsidy system, according to a 2003 analysis by the Center on Law And Social Policy (CLASP). CLASP found that states did contract parts of their subsidy systems for several reasons, including to stabilize and to create more capacity. The ability to contract is particularly helpful in rural and low-income areas; it is also useful when meeting specific needs (e.g., Head Start wrap-around, non-traditional hours). Contracts also allowed states to offer differentiated rates to programs meeting higher quality standards or other criteria. [Untapped Potential: How States Use Contracts to Shore Up Child Care Choices, CLASP, 2003]

Every state receiving CCDF funds must comply with federal regulations for the use of those dollars, including maximum eligibility levels. According to the federal Child Care Bureau, 26 states lowered their eligibility thresholds between 2001 and 2003. Still, 12 states raised their eligibility thresholds during that same time period.

Universal Preschool

Motivated by research illustrating the importance of early education to later academic achievement and by the standard testing required under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, states are increasingly taking steps to create pre-kindergarten programs. Over 40 states have some type of pre-kindergarten program. [Interview with Rachel Schumacher, CLASP, August 2004]

The most well-known of these efforts – and the only one which is considered "universal" in scope – is the Georgia Universal Pre-K program, launched in the mid-1990's and funded through proceeds from Georgia's state lottery. New Jersey also has a pre-k program, targeted toward the so-called Abbott Districts, which in a 1997 New Jersey Supreme Court case were deemed to be providing inadequate and unconstitutional public education.

Community Input (testimony) and Findings

Testimony received at regional public hearings provided topics for spirited discussion among the service delivery subcommittee members. The following points summarize the most prominent themes from the testimony:

- There were diverse perspectives on the **purchase of services**. Many testified in support of the localized purchasing model developed through the Community Partnerships for Children program. Many others supported modeling the purchase of service in the new agency on the current Office of Child Care Services combination of state level contracts and regionally managed vouchers, but with a planning function at the local level. (Strengths of each model are further delineated below)
- There was general support for including **after-school and out-of-school time** (AS/OST) services (school-age child care) under the jurisdiction of the Department of Early Education and Care. Individuals and organizations representing the school-age field specifically asked that AS/OST services be given their own office within the department.
- Several parents and representatives of public schools testified in support of integrated preschool programs.
- Early Intervention providers testified in support of keeping the program at the Department of Public Health where it is now housed. The most significant issue raised was that of accessing private medical insurer coverage as a source of revenue for the program. Providers maintained that third-party billing provisions would be in jeopardy if Early Intervention was moved to another agency.
- Early education providers testified in favor of maintaining and building upon the mixed system of early education and care when developing a new universal preschool program.

Discussion and deliberations of subcommittee

The charge of the service delivery subcommittee was to make recommendations in response to the following questions and directives:

What does a quality program service delivery system look like for children and families?

- identify current programs available statewide and the accessibility and availability to consumers
- identify current parent and human service components for all children in early education and care programs birth through school-age

- make recommendations on a streamlined system providing continuity of care and services for children and families
- make recommendations including areas for further investigation

To address the broad range of issues under service delivery, this subcommittee organized its work by discussing:

- the scope and content of the new Department of Early Education and Care
- recommendations for coordinating and streamlining the early education and care delivery system
- developing recommendations for the creation of a new universal preschool program

To assist with its deliberations, the subcommittee co-chairs invited several individuals to present information for consideration and to answer questions of members. These individuals included:

- Elisabeth Schaefer, *Department of Education*
- Rich Robison, Federation for Children with Special Needs
- Ron Benham, Department of Public Health
- Tom Kingston, Superintendent of the Chelsea School System (on behalf of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents)

Scope and Content of Department of Early Education and Care

Age Range

Subcommittee members raised a number of issues and concerns related to relocating after-school and out-of-school time programs from the Office of Child Care Service and the Department of Education:

- the need to consider funding streams and any limitations or directives around federal and other resources supporting these programs
- considerations related to workforce development
- the relationship and connections between after-school and out-of-school time programs and education in the schools
- licensing issues
- the need for a wide variety of programs to meet different needs
- continuity of care for children and families
- location, availability, and length of day of programs
- kindergarten wrap-around programs
- the general quality of school and non-school programs

Birth to Three

There was general agreement that all existing child care, home visiting, family support, and early intervention programs serving children ages birth to three fall within the mission of the Department of Early Education and Care. The following programs were recommended for inclusion in the new department:

- Parent Child Home Program (currently at DOE)
- Massachusetts Family Networks (currently at DOE)
- Child Care Subsidy Programs (currently at OCCS)

In discussing Early Intervention (EI), the funding issues were more limiting and complicated. While the federal funding for Early Intervention is not required to go to any one specific agency, current administrators of the program are concerned that if the program is moved to a "non-health" agency, private medical insurers will not be as willing to recognize the service as medically necessary and, therefore, be willing to cover its costs – jeopardizing as much as a third of the statewide funding for the program. Subcommittee members thoroughly discussed this consideration and agreed that there was no benefit to putting the funding of a successful model at risk. They felt strongly however that the services delivered and the mission of the Early Intervention program fit squarely into the new Department. Further discussion of this point led to a recommendation that EI move to the new agency over time and with sufficient provisions in place to protect its current system of funding.

In addition, subcommittee members felt strongly that wherever Early Intervention is located it is critical to address the coordination of those services with early education and care services. In particular, families and children need additional support as they transition between EI services and preschool programs at age three.

Preschool and Kindergarten

Preschool services for children with special needs currently operate in two systems – licensed programs under OCCS and public school-based programs under DOE. Subcommittee members felt, however, that in comparison to kindergarten (discussed below) these programs are not so highly identified with the public school systems. In addition, the subcommittee felt that locating preschool programs for children with special needs (including integrated preschool classrooms) under the new agency would help support appropriate practice and coordination of services for children. Members recognized, however, that the public schools system holds responsibility under the law for insuring that preschool-aged children with special needs receive appropriate services, and that some interagency agreement and collaboration may be needed to help ensure accountability.

While subcommittee members felt that the Department of Early Education and Care clearly encompassed children of kindergarten age, some felt it would be inappropriate to separate kindergarten from the administration of grades 1-12 in the public school setting. Although kindergarten is not mandatory and some Massachusetts children currently attend kindergarten in private settings, kindergarten is considered culturally to be part of public education. For those reasons, subcommittee members agreed to recommend moving privately operated, licensed kindergarten programs and subsidies currently under the purview of OCCS to the new Department of Early Education and Care, while keeping administration of public kindergarten programs under DOE.

After-School and Out-of-School Time

The subcommittee considered a number of issues related to after-school and out-of-school time subsidy and grant programs, including:

- continuity of services for families as children age out of early education and care programs
- the ability to easily use federal child care dollars currently administered by EOHHS via OCCS
- flexibility and options for parents, providing broader programmatic options with a wider focus

Although there was general agreement that these issues would be best addressed by locating AS/OST programs at the Department of Early Education and Care, there was also an acknowledgement by subcommittee members that relationships and collaboration between AS/OST programs and public schools were important for two reasons:

- locating programs in public schools may be more consumer friendly
- as children get older coordination between in-school and out-of-school time learning activities is important

Although the subcommittee agreed to recommend that all AS/OST programs be moved to the Department of Early Education and Care, some outstanding questions remain about provisions that need to be in place around specific programs. For example, federal funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers is required to be administered by the designated state educational authority (in Massachusetts, the Department of Education). This issue must be clarified with the U.S. Department of Education before proceeding with relocation of the 21st Century Community Learning Center grant program at the state level.

Streamlining and Coordinating Services

The subcommittee approached the streamlining and coordination of early education and care services by first looking at the delivery models currently in place and taking inventory of their strengths.

Strengths of the Community Partnerships for Children Model

- planning function
- local inter-agency collaboration and cooperation
- outreach and representation of community
- local access for parents in some cases
- eligibility for children, i.e. annual determination; and once eligible can stay in program
- maximizing of resources for professional development, workforce, quality support
- services for families that aren't income eligible
- economically integrated classrooms
- program quality criteria

- serving at-risk children
- broader eligibility (income)
- kindergarten readiness/transition piece is required of council
- DOE identification numbers help with data collection
- supports mixed system

Strengths of Resource and Referral Agency Model

- in touch with all care providers (licensed, license exempt, full age range)
- supports the mixed system
- streamlined administrative costs
- one subsidy management system and data collection system statewide
- more access for transient families in some cases
- maintains regional information
- continuity of care between towns
- economy of scale; consistency of policies
- scale/ regional supports for training, etc. in some cases
- recruitment of and outreach to providers to expand capacity
- "virtual gateway" system (referrals to other programs)
- workforce trainings, professional development

Strengths of the Direct Contract Delivery System

- allows state to allocate according to need
- reliable funding to stabilize programs
- residency is not a factor
- flexible between program types (Infant/toddler, preschool, school-age)
- contracts provide continuity of funding
- identifies slots for subsidized children and specialized services
- provides more efficient purchasing of additional services
- streamlines system administratively and for parents

Strengths of Public School Services

- free to consumers
- integrated classrooms
- education level of staff (certified, degreed, some specialized)
- no parent eligibility requirement
- required to provide specialized services under one roof
- ratios usually good
- continuity to kindergarten (in some cases)
- siblings can be in same school
- strong relationship with Early Intervention providers
- ongoing required professional development

Strengths of Head Start Delivery System

- comprehensive services
- strong family model
- free to consumers
- targets low-income/at-risk
- some early Head Start programs (birth to age three)
- rigorous, high standards
- yearly cost of living adjustments (COLA) for staff salaries
- research-based practices
- requirement of degreed teacher and ongoing professional development
- eligibility is two years

Building on the strengths listed above, the group began defining the elements and functions of a high-quality, streamlined system.

Eligibility and Subsidy Intake

The subcommittee first discussed eligibility determination under a streamlined system. The following considerations were raised and discussed:

- the cost of providing multiple sites for eligibility determination vs. easy access for parents
- alternative ways of providing access (geographic, technological, etc.)
- the importance of data integrity and maintenance, and the related costs

The subcommittee identified the following elements as important to a streamlined eligibility system:

- Uniform eligibility requirements
 - o annual eligibility determination across the board
 - o same sliding fee scale
 - o same documentation required, which should be as minimal as possible under federal funding regulations
- Multiple methods of subsidy intake, including different means (internet, phone, paper, etc.) and different locations (local and regional)

More specifically, the group agreed to recommend an increased eligibility level (125% of SMI) to address the need to streamline eligibility, while ensuring that low-income working families have maximum access to services. At the same time, the subcommittee acknowledged the need for further information about the cost and impact of raising eligibility to that level.

Purchasing of Subsidies under the Department of Early Education and Care

Developing a recommendation around the purchase of direct services was easily the most challenging task before the service delivery subcommittee. Members of the subcommittee were aware of the need to balance efforts to streamline and use resources efficiently with maintaining the strengths of the existing components of the early education and care delivery system. While there was general agreement that there were strengths in the local, regional, and state level structures of the existing system, there was strong disagreement over the level at which subsidy dollars should be managed and allocated.

One proposal that had some support among subcommittee members was for the state to apportion total available subsidy dollars out regionally based on needs data collected by local entities. Vouchers for all subsidy programs would be managed through a regional entity. Contracts for subsidies could be divided, with larger contracts going directly from the state to providers, and smaller contracts going from the regional entity to providers.

In this scenario, local entities would continue to have a strong planning and needs assessment role and could also have a role in referral and subsidy intake. In addition, local councils could continue to build and maintain collaborations to help coordinate services for children. Regional-level management of smaller contracts might put smaller programs in a better position to compete for contracts than they currently enjoy for state-level contracts. However, there would be no local role in managing subsidy dollars, including preschool subsidies.

While there was some support for that proposal, there was also support for administering and allocating dollars at the local level. Supporters of that position argued that currently about 60% of CPC lead agents are public schools, and that moving their subsidy management role to the regional level might remove the incentive they currently have for participating in local early education and care collaborations. In addition, supporters of local purchasing argued that local allocation of dollars could better address critical needs identified at the local level and that local management of dollars could leverage local investments (municipal and private) and cost savings.

Supporters of a more centralized state-level purchasing system argued that the state and/or regional level may be better equipped to handle the volume of service delivery dollars and the number of subsidies under the new agency (infant, toddler, preschool, and school-age) than entities at the local level. Subcommittee members also made the case that centralized purchasing could help address inequities in purchasing and subsidy management that currently exist across local communities under the CPC program.

In the end, while subcommittee members could agree that there should be some role for local, regional and state level entities in the administration of Early Education and Care dollars, they could not agree on a recommendation about where the purchasing authority should lie. The subcommittee did agree, however, that in any purchasing system the reimbursement rate for direct services should reflect the current market rate and should be sufficient to support high-quality services.

Referral and Data Management

The service delivery subcommittee had a lengthy discussion about the program referral function (giving families information about available programs) and talked about the

benefits of and challenges facing local and regional entities in serving that function. A well constructed and maintained database should assist local and regional entities in providing families with information about available options that meet their needs and not recommend specific programs.

The subcommittee discussed the possibility of having a local referral function and a regional referral function, so parents have both options and can get more intimate data about programs on the local level. A suggestion was made that if both entities were using the same database, and that was maintained at the regional level, data integrity issues could be addressed.

At the end of the subcommittee process, no recommendation around data management and referral was agreed upon, pending decisions about the role of local and regional entities.

Universal Preschool

Creating a universally accessible preschool education system in Massachusetts is a priority for the members of the Early Education and Care Advisory Committee and for others in the field. The Advisory Committee's work takes place within the broader context of a statewide and national dialogue about the best way to build such a preschool system. The program service delivery subcommittee's recommendations in this area reflect one approach toward reaching universal access, while not losing sight of the needs of the Commonwealth's lowest income and working families.

The subcommittee's recommendations related to universal preschool were also made within the context of the broader Advisory Committee's work and recommendations, which lay the foundation and created the critical elements for a broader system of high-quality early education and care – including a workforce development system, a school readiness assessment system, and high-quality programs – for all children birth through school-age.

For the purposes of this report, the subcommittee focused on building upon that broader early education and care system in order to set the stage for a high-quality universal preschool program. Eligibility guidelines were developed to reach a universally accessible preschool program within ten years.

Subcommittee Recommendations

I. Scope and Content of Agency

Recommendation SD1

The new department shall include a mixed system of early education and child care programs serving children birth through fourteen years, and through sixteen years for children with special needs.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD2

In addition, the administration of school-age (after school and out of school time) programs shall fall under the new Department of Early Education and Care, and the legislature shall pursue further study on the issues of the extended school day and after-school programming; Continued and increasing interdepartmental and local partnerships between community based providers of services and public and non-public schools is strongly encouraged.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD3

Subsidies and private licensing for kindergarten programs shall move from the Office of Child Care Services to the Department of Early Education and Care while public kindergartens continue to be administered through the Department of Education. [Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation SD4

The Department of Early Education and Care shall have oversight of integrated preschool classrooms currently operated by public school systems under the Department of Education. The two Departments shall collaborate to ensure all obligations under federal and state laws are met.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD5

The Department of Early Education and Care shall have oversight of the Massachusetts Family Network Program and the Parent Child Home Program, both currently at the Department of Education.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD6

To reduce fragmentation, the Department of Early Education and Care shall explore ways to bring Early Intervention under its authority without jeopardizing Early Intervention's funding sources, and shall report its recommendations to the appropriate committees of the General Court, including but not limited to the House and Senate Committees on Ways and Means, by July 1, 2005.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD7

The new agency shall include licensing in its functions, and develop and implement uniform licensing standards for all early education and care programs.

[Modified by full Committee]

II. Streamlining and Coordination of the Early Education and Care System

Recommendation SD8

The Department of Early Education and Care shall have a role for state, regional and local entities, potentially including but not limited to local and regional offices and local councils on Early Education and Care.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD9

The Department of Early Education and Care shall prioritize funding for services including but not limited to direct services, workforce and professional development, and quality enhancement; The Department shall streamline the purchasing of direct services and address equity concerns across communities.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD10

The Department of Early Education and Care shall review the feasibility of providing special education services to children throughout the mixed early education and care system.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD11

Medical services during school time for children over age three shall be coverable through third party billing of private medical insurers.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD12

To provide for continuity of services, the Fiscal Year 2006 budget for the Department of Early Education and Care shall:

- provide for the continued purchasing of services to children through vouchers, contracts and grants, while the Board of Early Education and Care makes decisions about the future purchasing of direct service;
- minimally maintain current funding levels for any of the existing early childhood and school-age programs and services, in addition to any funding identified for newly created programs

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD13

In the system of subsidy eligibility and intake, there shall be:

- 1) Uniform eligibility requirements
 - a) An annual eligibility determination across the board
 - b) The same sliding fee scale
 - c) The same documentation required, which shall be as minimal as possible under federal funding regulations

2) Multiple methods of subsidy intake, including different means (internet, phone, paper, etc.) and different locations (local and regional)

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD14

The eligibility level for all subsidies shall be raised over time to 125% of state median income (SMI), with a sliding fee scale; Those currently in the system shall be grandfathered to stay in it up through that income level and the entry level shall be adjusted to 85% of SMI, then eligibility will increase over four years, by 10% each year to 125% of SMI.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD15

Subsidy reimbursement rates shall be set at a rate that supports high-quality education and care and helps ensure parent choice.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD16

Policies of the Department of Early Education and Care shall create defined and articulated interagency agreements to maximize ease of transition between Early Intervention, preschool, and kindergarten services for families and children.

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation SD17

The Department of Early Education and Care shall foster collaborations and coordination among programs and services within and outside of the agency serving children within the age range of the agency.

[Consensus of full Committee]

III. Universal Preschool Program

Recommendation SD18

Phasing in of the Universal Preschool Program shall build on the subcommittee's earlier recommendation around uniform and expanded eligibility for subsidy programs. That recommendation raises eligibility for all subsidy programs to 125% of the State Median Income in the fourth year of implementation. For the purposes of Universal Preschool, eligibility for three and four year olds shall then continue to increase over time in the following increments:

- Year 5: 140% of SMI
- Year 6: 155% of SMI
- Year 7: 170% of SMI
- Year 8: 185% of SMI
- Year 9: 200% of SMI
- Year 10: Universal Eligibility

[Consensus of full Committee]

Recommendation SD19

The Universal Preschool program should use a sliding fee scale consistent with the one used for other subsidy programs, but expanded to at least 200% of State Median Income. [Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD20

The goal of the Universal Preschool program is to prepare all children for school, to provide that all children enter school on an even playing field.

[Modified by full Committee]

Recommendation SD21

Universal Preschool should be delivered through the existing mixed system of programs and providers.

[Consensus of full Committee]

VIII. Conclusion

The members of the Early Education and Care Advisory Committee appreciate the opportunity to provide recommendations as the legislature and the administration continue to build the Department of Early Education and Care. The new department has a critical role to play in improving the lives of the Commonwealth's children and families. The Advisory Committee recommends full consideration of the proposals for workforce development, school readiness assessment, program quality, and program service delivery specified in this report. The General Court and the Governor have an opportunity to lay the foundation for a universally accessible, high-quality preschool program that will prepare children for a successful future. Such a goal goes hand-in-hand with the creation of an early education and care system that is effective, efficient and developed with the needs of children central to its mission.



APPENDIX A

Early Education and Care Advisory Committee Subcommittees

Overall goal of the subcommittees

The four subcommittees were drawn from the charge of outside section 344 of the fiscal year 2005 budget. Each subject area is a significant component in implementing high-quality education and care which meets the needs of children and families. The goal of each group is to survey across the spectrum, birth through school-age care, in order to have "the big picture". As the Commonwealth builds a comprehensive system it is important to understand all components so that resources can be allocated in an informed prioritized way and that the fragmentation that currently exists does not continue in the new agency. The priority of the Advisory Committee's recommendations will be affordable, accessible, quality preschool. There could be a prioritized list of recommendations covering the full spectrum as many existing programs span the ages and are wondering "where they fit in".

Joni Block and Christine Johnson-Staub will be consultants to the EEC Advisory Committee and support the work of the subcommittees.

Subcommittees

- I. Workforce Development System
 - i. Co-chaired by:
 - 1. Anne O'Driscoll, former Speaker Finneran's office
 - 2. Mary Ann Anthony, Mass Association for the Education of Young Children
 - ii. Members:
 - 1. Sen. Menard / Bridget Morrissey
 - 2. Rep. St. Fleur/ Michelle Lisio
 - 3. Vicki Bartolini, Mass Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators
 - 4. Anne Nunes, Mass Independent Child Care Organization
 - 5. Peter Cross, Mass Teachers Association
 - iii. Charge: What is needed to support the education, training and compensation of the early education and care workforce?
 - 1. Review current and recent research and reports.
 - 2. Consider continuity of education and care for children birth through school age.
 - 3. Consider workforce turnover issues.
 - 4. Make recommendations, including areas for further study.
- II. School Readiness Assessment System
 - i. Co-chaired by:
 - 1. Maureen Ferris, Children's Legislative Caucus
 - 2. Amy Kershaw, Strategies for Children
 - ii. Members:
 - 1. Sen. Tarr

- 2. Ada Rosmarin, Mass Association of Community Partnerships for Children
- 3. Mass Federation of Teachers
- 4. Linda Stice, School Committee
- iii. Charge: What does a school readiness assessment system look like?
 - 1. Review current and recent research and reports
 - 2. Consider transitions from early intervention programs and services to preschool programs and services.
 - 3. Consider transitions from preschool programs to public school kindergarten programs and services.
 - 4. Make recommendations including areas for further investigation.

III. Program Quality

- i. Co-chaired by:
 - 1. Sen. Magnani/Linda Martin
 - 2. Caroline Haines, Mass Head Start Association
- ii. Members:
 - 1. Kathleen McDermott, family childcare representative
 - 2. Wayne Ysaguirre, family child care
- iii. Charge: How, when and by whom is program quality determined?
 - 1. Identify independent evaluation models currently being used in Massachusetts programs.
 - 2. Consider what other states are using or are considering.
 - 3. Make recommendations.

IV. Program Service Delivery

- i. Co-chaired by:
 - 1. Sylvia Smith, Sen. Antonioni's office
 - 2. Stephen Perla, non-public schools representative
- ii. Members:
 - 1. Sen. McGee/Elana Amaral
 - 2. Sue Halloran, Mass Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Network
 - 3. Helen Charlupski, Mass Association of School Committees
 - 4. Stacy Dimino, Mass Association of Day Care Agencies
- iii. Charge: What does a quality program service delivery system look like for children and families?
 - 1. Identify current programs available statewide and the accessibility and availability to consumers.
 - 2. Identify current parent and human service components for all children in early education and care programs birth through school-age.
 - 3. Make recommendations on a streamlined system providing continuity of care and services for children and families.

APPENDIX B

MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION COMPACT

SPRING 2003

BACKGROUND

The Early Childhood Education Compact builds upon both the Commonwealth Transfer Compact adopted by the Board of Regents in 1990 and the Joint Admissions Agreement adopted by the Board of Higher Education in 2000. It represents another step in continuing efforts to facilitate the transfer of credit within the public higher education system. The adoption in October of 2001 of new licens are regulations by the Department of Education intensified the need to identify a program of courses that would transfer from community colleges into teacher preparation programs at public four-year institutions. The looming teacher shortage and the widespread demand for more teachers from minority groups have heightened the need for a smooth transition into teacher education from community colleges, which have significant minority enrollments. In addition, as research continues to emphasize the connection between each child's early experiences and later success in school, there is a growing need for experienced, well-trained teachers to teach and care for our youngest children in early childhood settings.

Development of this Compact was also supported by the Office of Acting Governor Jane Swift, the Massachusetts Department of Education and the Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services (OCCS). In November of 2001, the Governor's Commission on School Readiness issued its report. The Commission recommended many steps to support the early childcare workforce, and among these was a recommendation that "state-funded colleges and universities implement articulation agreements... that would make it easier for providers of school readiness services to complete degree requirements." In addition, the early childhood field has undertaken several initiatives in recent years to further professional development such as the MDOE's "Advancing the Field" project working to establish pathways to the baccalaureate for workers in the early childhood field. To represent these perspectives and interests, representatives of the Office of Child Care Services, the Advancing the Field project, and child care service providers served on the Working Group that developed this Compact.

The proposed Early Childhood Education Compact:

- specifies coursework that fulfills OCCS professional child care qualifications for certification as Lead Teacher;
- prepares students for entry into a Bachelor's degree program approved for Early Childhood Education "Route One" licensure;
- guarantees admission to the Early Childhood Education licensure program at Massachusetts state colleges or university campuses offering Early Childhood Education licensure at the baccalaureate level (note: See Section V for exceptions to this guarantee);

• guarantees that 60 credits earned by students who fulfill the core requirements and other provisions of the compact will be accepted as transfer credits by the receiving institution and applied to the students' baccalaureate degrees.

The Early Childhood Education Compact not only reduces the student's level of uncertainty about acceptance into an Early Childhood Education licensure program and transfer of credits, but also establishes the objective of applying the same requirements to transfer and native students alike. (The term "native students" refers to students who began their undergraduate education at the baccalaureate institution.)

Although this Compact is directed at easing the transition between community colleges and public four-year institutions that offer teacher preparation programs at the baccalaureate level, it only addresses programs that prepare students for licensure in the public schools. We are committed to expanding this model to facilitate transitions by community college graduates to non-licensure baccalaureate programs related to early childhood education. This alternate pathway is attractive to child care professionals who desire a bachelor's degree and want to continue their work with our youngest children and their families in programs of early care and education across the Commonwealth.

THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION COMPACT

For students transferring from Massachusetts community colleges to public colleges and universities offering Early Childhood Education licensure at the baccalaureate level and who agree to the compact.

Section I. Requirement for Early Childhood Education Compact Status

A student shall be eligible for Early Childhood Education Compact status if he or she has met the following requirements:

- a. Achieved a passing score on the Communications and Literacy Skills Test (CLST) of the Massachusetts Test for Educator Licensure (MTEL). (NOTE: This requirement may be completed after receipt of the Associate Degree, however, ECE Compact status will not be awarded until candidates have completed this requirement).
- b. Completed an associate degree with a minimum of 60 credit hours exclusive of developmental coursework;
- c. Achieved a minimum cumulative grade point average of not less than 2.75 (in a 4.0 system). (Note: at their discretion, individual institutions may require a different grade point average);
- d. Completed the following 45 60 credit core curriculum, exclusive of developmental coursework. The core is designed to meet the requirements of the Commonwealth Transfer Compact, the Office of Child Care Services qualifications for professional child care workers (See 102 CMR 7.07(21) of the Standards for the Licensure or Approval of Group Child Care Centers and School Age Child Care Programs), and the Department of Education's regulations for licensure as an Early Childhood Teacher. (See Section 7.05 (1) and Section 7.06: (5) of the Regulations for Educator Licensure and Preparation Program Approval).

6 credits Composition/Writing

18 credits *Humanities* and *Social Science* (9 credits of each)

- a. To satisfy the Commonwealth Transfer Compact, students must complete 9 credits in each of the above areas, and these courses must be offered by humanities and social science departments.
- b. In addition, students should select courses from these areas that will help prepare them for the Subject Matter Test for Early Childhood Education of the Massachusetts Test for Educator Licensure (MTEL). Otherwise, they are

unlikely to be able to meet the demands of the test and their baccalaureate degree in the 60-68 credits normally required upon transfer to a participating four-year institution. The topics listed below cover the humanities and social science topics that will be addressed in the subject matter test.

- Children's Literature (This must be a humanities course to meet transfer compact requirements. Students not taking this course must take 2 of the courses listed under "3-6 credits" below.)
- History, Geography, Government, Economics
- The Arts, basic principles and concepts. (Studio and performance courses will not prepare students for the MTEL)

3 credits Early Childhood Growth and Development or Child Psychology course

(Birth to age 8 is required for OCCS certification.)

If course is offered by a Social Sciences department, it can be used to satisfy part of the 9 credits of Social Science required above)

4 credits Physical Science with lab or Appropriate Integrated Laboratory Science

> Note: to satisfy the Commonwealth Transfer Compact, this course must be a science department course, not an education course.

4 credits Biological Science with lab or Appropriate Integrated Laboratory Science

> Note: to satisfy the Commonwealth Transfer Compact, this course must be a science department course, not an education course.

3 credits Mathematics: Course should cover number sense and numeration; geometry and measurement; patterns and functions; and data analysis.

12 credits Early Childhood Education courses

> All course curricula must address issues, NOTE: adaptations, and procedures for children with diverse needs, including those with disabilities, those with limited English proficiency, and those who are gifted and talented.

> 3 credits Introduction to Early Childhood Education with Field Experience: Should include

December 15, 2004

foundations and national state and frameworks

3 – 6 credits Early Childhood Education Practicum: Course should be a capstone course of at least 150 hours over a minimum of 8 weeks in PreK-K education (includes pre-school settings approved by OCCS) and be accompanied by a theoretical component that integrates the practicum experience with previous classroom learning.

3 - 6 credits

Choose 1 - 2 Courses from the following list of topics (Students who have not selected Children's Literature will need 2. See note below.):

- Course Addressing Issues, Adaptations and Procedures for Children with Special Needs: Should include I.E.P. preparation, implementation and evaluation. To qualify as OCCS "Children with special needs, birth – 16 vears" course. the course must specifically address inclusion of children with special needs under age 3.
- Early Childhood Curriculum*
- Program Planning*
- Behavior Management*
 - * One of these courses, in addition to Child Growth and Development, is required for OCCS Lead Teacher Certification.

Note: to qualify for OCCS Lead Teacher, students must have four courses in Early Childhood. One must be Child Development, which is required in this transfer compact program, and another must be selected from among the asterisked courses listed above. The Introduction to Early Childhood Education will count as the third, and Children's Literature can count as the fourth. Students who do not select Children's Literature as one of their humanities/social science courses will need to take two courses from the four listed above.

9 - 15 credits Preparation courses for Academic Major after Transfer (NOTE: liberal arts and sciences courses may also fulfill other core requirements listed above)

or

Additional *Early Childhood Education* courses. provided they are transferable to specific institutions through separate articulation agreements or course equivalencies

The sending institution is responsible for identifying on the transcript each student who is a candidate for transfer under this compact.

Section II: Supplemental Material

In order to facilitate the transfer process and to document their future eligibility for licensure, students are strongly urged to create and maintain portfolios of their associate degree work. Portfolios should include course syllabi, papers and other student-created products, with particular emphasis on products that provide evidence of meeting the content and professional standards for teacher licensure. (See the Regulations for Teacher Licensure, Section 7.06 (5) and 7.08.)

Section III: Credits to be Transferred

Students fulfilling the requirements of the Early Childhood Education Compact are guaranteed a minimum of 60 transfer credits, exclusive of developmental credit as defined by the Board of Higher Education, applied to their degree requirements at the State College or University. The credits will be applied as follows:

- a. institutional general education requirements;
- b. academic major requirements;
- c. Early Childhood Education requirements;
- d. free electives.

Only college-level course credits consistent with the standards set forth in the Undergraduate Experience recommendations are included under this Compact. Credits awarded by the sending institution through CLEP, challenge examinations, and other life-experience evaluations for course credit will be included when the community college certifies that a student qualifies under this Compact.

Section IV: Credits Beyond the Associate Degree

To complete the baccalaureate degree and receive Early Childhood Education licensure at the baccalaureate level, a student who transfers under this Compact may not be required to take more than 68 additional credits at the receiving institution unless the requirements of the student's academic major are such that:

the combination of additional requirements in institutional general education requirements, academic major requirements, and Early Childhood Education requirements total more than 68 credits.

Under these circumstances, transfer students will be subject to the same requirements as native students. (The term "native students" refers to students who began their undergraduate education at the baccalaureate institution.)

It is further understood that receiving institutions may require additional coursework if Department of Education licensure requirements change during the course of the associate degree.

Section V: Admission to Competitive Majors or Programs

If because of space or fiscal limitations the receiving institution does not admit all qualified applicants to a given major or program, the receiving institution will use the same criteria for applicants who are transfer students under this Compact as it does for its native students.

Section VI: Early Childhood Education Transfer Coordinating Committee

An Early Childhood Education Transfer Coordinating Committee, convened by the Board of Higher Education, will provide implementation and oversight of the Early Childhood Education Compact. The Coordinating Committee will consist of a total of eleven members: six members who are education faculty/administrators familiar with licensure regulations (two from the Community Colleges appointed by the Community College Executive Office, two from the State Colleges appointed by the State College Council of Presidents Office and two from the University appointed by the President's Office in consultation with the campuses); the three Joint Admissions Steering Committee co-chairs (one representing the Community Colleges, the State Colleges and the University campuses, respectively); and a representative from each of the following: the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, the Office of Child Care Services, the Department of Education and child care providers.

The Coordinating Committee will monitor, evaluate and, when necessary, modify the administration of the Early Childhood Education Compact. In addition, the Committee should implement guidelines that are consistent across the system to address such issues as: professional development, student advising, preparation for the CLST of MTEL, and curriculum development. The Early Childhood Education Transfer Coordinating Committee will work to create a system for evaluating the effectiveness of this Compact, and will assist the campuses with developing courses that meet the Department of Education's core content knowledge requirements and the Office For Child Care Services' professional child care requirements for certification.

Section VII: Publication of Requirements

Each public college and university that accepts this policy shall include in its official undergraduate catalog the provisions of the Early Childhood Education Compact. Each campus agrees to use its best effort to provide participating Community College, State

College or University campuses, respectively, with prompt notifications of changes in programs and curricula.

Section VIII: Transfer Records

The student with Early Childhood Education Compact status will be furnished by the receiving institution a list of courses to be fulfilled to earn a bachelors degree no later than the end of the first semester at the receiving institution.

Section IX: Student Appeals

A student who believes that the provisions of this Compact have not been applied fairly to his/her transfer application has the right to appeal.

Initially, differences of interpretation regarding the award of transfer credit shall be resolved between the student and the institution. The student shall present his/her evaluation of the situation to the institution from which he/she is transferring. Representatives from the two institutions shall then have the opportunity to resolve the differences.

Absent a satisfactory resolution, differences of interpretation may be presented to the Joint Admissions Agreement Subcommittee for Appeals.

Section X: Effective Date

The Early Childhood Education Compact takes effect for students matriculating at participating Community Colleges beginning in the Fall Term of 2004.

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